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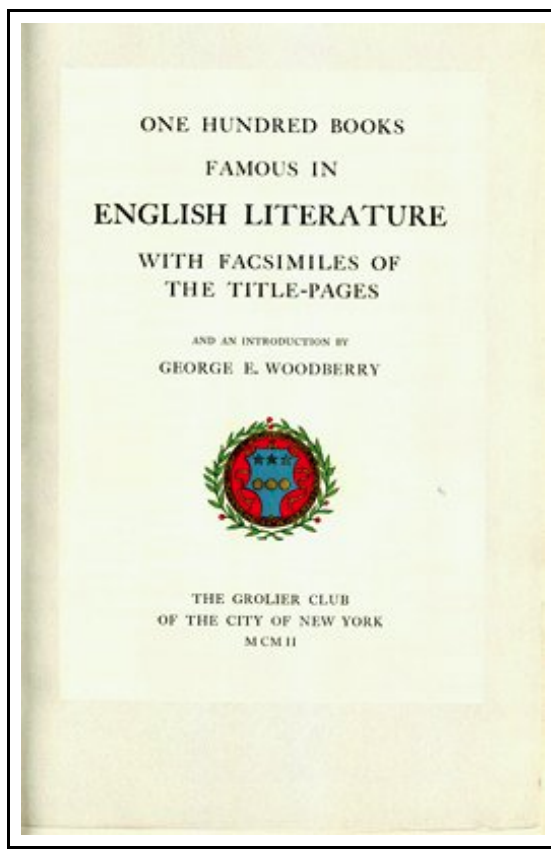
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# ONE HUNDRED BOOKS FAMOUS IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

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ONE HUNDRED BOOKS  
FAMOUS IN  
**ENGLISH LITERATURE**  
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THE TITLE-PAGES  
AND AN INTRODUCTION BY  
GEORGE E. WOODBERRY  
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# FACSIMILE TITLES

TITLE	AUTHOR	DATE	PAGE
First Page of the Canterbury Tales	Chaucer	1478	<u>3</u>
First Page of the Confessio Amantis	Gower	1483	<u>5</u>
First Page of the Morte Arthure	Malory	1485	<u>7</u>
The Booke of Common Praier	...	1549	<u>9</u>
The Vision of Pierce Plowman	Langland	1550	<u>11</u>
Chronicles of England, Scotlande, and Ireland	Holinshed	1577	<u>13</u>
A Myrrour for Magistrates	...	1563	<u>15</u>
Songes and Sonettes	Surrey	1567	<u>17</u>
The Tragidie of Ferrex and Porrex	Sackville	1570	<u>19</u>
Euphues. The Anatomy of Wit	Lylie	1579	<u>21</u>
The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia	Sidney	1590	<u>23</u>
The Faerie Queene	Spenser	1590	<u>25</u>
Essaies	Bacon	1598	<u>27</u>
The Principal Navigations, Voiages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation	Blithuilton	1598	<u>29</u>
The Whole Works of Homer	Chapman	1611	<u>31</u>
The Holy Bible	King James's Version	1611	<u>33</u>
The Workes of Benjamin Jonson	Jonson	1616	<u>35</u>
The Anatomy of Melancholy	Burton	1621	<u>37</u>
Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies	Shakespeare	1623	<u>39</u>
The Tragedy of the Dutchesse of Malfy	Webster	1623	<u>41</u>
A New Way to Pay Old Debts	Massinger	1633	<u>43</u>
The Broken Heart	Ford	1633	<u>45</u>
The Famous Tragedy of the Rich Jew of Malta	Marlowe	1633	<u>47</u>
The Temple	Herbert	1633	<u>49</u>
Poems	Donne	1633	<u>51</u>

Religio Medici	Browne	1642	<u>53</u>
The Workes of Edmond Waller Esquire	...	1645	<u>55</u>
Comedies and Tragedies	Beaumont and Fletcher	1647	<u>57</u>
Hesperides	Herrick	1648	<u>59</u>
The Rule and Exercises of Holy Living	Taylor	1650	<u>61</u>
The Compleat Angler	Walton	1653	<u>63</u>
Hudibras	Butler	1663	<u>65</u>
Paradise Lost	Milton	1667	<u>67</u>
The Pilgrims Progress	Bunyan	1678	<u>69</u>
Absalom and Achitophel	Dryden	1681	<u>71</u>
An Essay Concerning Humane Understanding	Locke	1690	<u>73</u>
The Way of the World	Congreve	1700	<u>75</u>
The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England	Clarendon	1702	<u>77</u>
The Lucubrations of Isaac Bickerstaff Esq.	Steele	1710	<u>79</u>
The Spectator	Addison	1711	<u>81</u>
The Life and Strange Surprizing Adventures of Robinson Crusoe	Defoe	1719	<u>83</u>
Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World	Swift	1726	<u>85</u>
An Essay on Man	Pope	1733	<u>87</u>
The Analogy of Religion	Butler	1736	<u>89</u>
Reliques of Ancient English Poetry	Percy	1765	<u>91</u>
Odes on Several Descriptive and Allegoric Subjects	Collins	1747	<u>93</u>
Clarissa	Richardson	1748	<u>95</u>
The History of Tom Jones	Fielding	1749	<u>97</u>
An Elegy Wrote in a Country Church Yard	Gray	1751	<u>99</u>
A Dictionary of the English Language	Johnson	1755	<u>101</u>
Poor Richard's Almanack	Franklin	1758	<u>103</u>
Commentaries on the Laws of England	Blackstone	1765	<u>105</u>

[pg ix]



The Vicar of Wakefield	Goldsmith	1766	107
A Sentimental Journey	Sterne	1768	109
The Federalist	...	1788	111
The Expedition of Humphry Clinker	Smollett	16[7]71	113
An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations	Smith	1776	115
The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire	Gibbon	1776	117
The School for Scandal	Sheridan	1777	119
The Task	Cowper	1785	121
Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect	Burns	1786	123
The Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne	White	1789	125
Reflections on the Revolution in France	Burke	1790	127
Rights of Man	Paine	1791	129
The Life of Samuel Johnson	Boswell	1791	131
Lyrical Ballads	Wordsworth	1798	133
A History of New York, from the Beginning of the World to the End of the Dutch Regime	Brinck	1800	135
Childe Harold's Pilgrimage	Byron	1812	137
Pride and Prejudice	Austen	1813	139
Christabel	Coleridge	1816	141
Ivanhoe	Scott	1820	143
Lamia, Isabella, The Eve of St. Agnes, and Other Poems	Keats	1820	145
Adonais	Shelley	1821	147
Elia	Lamb	1823	149
Memoirs of Samuel Pepys, Esq. F.R.S.	Pepys	1825	151
The Last of the Mohicans	Cooper	1826	153
Pericles and Aspasia	Landor	1836	155
The Pickwick Papers	Dickens	1837	157
Sartor Resartus	Carlyle	1834	159

[pg x]

Nature	Emerson	1836	161	
History of the Conquest of Peru	Prescott	1847	163	
The Raven and Other Poems	Poe	1845	165	
Jane Eyre	Brontë	1847	167	
Evangeline	Longfellow	1847	169	
Sonnets	Mrs. Browning	1847	171	
The Biglow Papers	Lowell	1848	173	
Vanity Fair	Thackeray	1848	175	
The History of England	Macaulay	1849	177	[pg xi
In Memoriam	Tennyson	1850	179	
The Scarlet Letter	Hawthorne	1850	181	
Uncle Tom's Cabin	Mrs. Stowe	1852	183	
The Stones of Venice	Ruskin	1851	185	
Men and Women	Browning	1855	187	
The Rise of the Dutch Republic	Motley	1856	189	
Adam Bede	George Eliot	1859	191	
On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection	Darwin	1859	193	
Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám	Fitzgerald	1859	195	
Apologia pro Vita Sua	Newman	1864	197	
Essays in Criticism	Arnold	1865	199	
Snow-Bound	Whittier	1866	201	

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Except where noted, all facsimiles of title-pages  
are of the size of those in the original editions.

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## INTRODUCTION

A BOOK is judged by its peers. In the presence of the greater works of authors there is no room for personal criticism; they constitute in themselves the perpetual mind of the race, and dispense with any private view. The eye rests on these hundred titles of books famous in English literature, as it reads a physical map by peak, river and coast, and sees in miniature the intellectual conformation of a nation. A different selection would only mean another point of view; some minor features might be replaced by others of similar subordination; but the mass of imagination and learning, the mind-achievement of the English race, is as unchangeable as a mountain landscape. Perspective thrusts its unconscious judgment upon the organs of sight, also; if Gower is thin with distance and the clump of the Elizabethans shows crowded with low spurs, the eye is not therefore deceived by the large pettiness of the foreground with its more numerous and distinct details. The mass governs. Darwin appeals to Milton; Shelley is judged by Pope, and Hawthorne by Congreve.

[pg xi]

These books must of necessity be national books; for fame, which is essentially the highest gift of which man has the giving, cannot be conferred except by a public voice. Fame dwells upon the lips of men. It is not that memorable books must all be people's books, though the greatest are such—the Book of Common Prayer, the Bible, Shakespeare; but those which embody some rare intellectual power, or illuminate some seldom visited tract of the spirit, or merely display some peculiar taste in learning or pastime, must yet have something racial in them, something public, to secure their hold against the detaching power of time; they must be English books, not in tongue only, but body and soul. They are not less the books of a nation because they are remote, superfine, uncommon. Such are the books of the poets—the Faërie Queene; books of the nobles—Arcadia; books of the scholar—the Anatomy of Melancholy. These books open the national genius as truly, kind by kind, as books of knowledge exhibit the nation's advancement in learning, stage by stage, when new sciences are brought to the birth. The Wealth of Nations, Locke's Essay, Blackstone's Commentaries, are not merely the product of private minds. They are landmarks of English intellect; and more, since they pass insensibly into the power of civilization in the land, feeding the general mind. The limited appeal that many classics made in their age, and still make, indicates lack of development in particular persons; but however numerous such individuals may be, in whatever majorities they may mass, the mind of the race, once having flowered, has flowered with the vigor of the stock. The Compleat Angler finds a rustic breast under much staid cloth; Pepys was never at a loss for a gossip since his seals were broken, and Donne evokes his fellow-eccentric whose hermitage is the scholar's bosom; but whether the charm work on few or on many is indifferent, for whom they affect, they affect through consanguinity. The books of a nation are those which are appropriate to its genius and embody its variations amid the changes of time; even its sports, like Euphues, are itself; and the works which denote the evolution of its civilized life in fructifying progress, whose

[pg xi]

increasing diversities are yet held in the higher harmony of one race, one temperament, one destiny, are without metaphor its Sibylline books, and true oracles of empire.

It is a sign of race in literature that a book can spare what is private to its author, and comes at last to forgo his earth-life altogether. This is obvious of works of knowledge, since positive truth gains nothing from personality, but feels it as an alloy; and a wise analysis will affirm the same of all long-lived books. Works of science are charters of nature, and submit to no human caprice; and, in a similar way, works of imagination, which are to the inward world of the spirit what works of science are to the natural universe, are charters of the soul, and borrow nothing from the hand that wrote them. How deciduous such books are of the private life needs only to be stated to be allowed. They cast biography from them like the cloak of the ascending prophet. An author is not rightly to be reckoned among immortals until he has been forgotten as a man, and become a shade in human memory, the myth of his own work. The anecdote lingering in the Mermaid Tavern is cocoon-stuff, and left for waste; time spiritualizes the soul it released in Shakespeare, and the speedier the change, so much the purer is the warrant of a life above death in the minds of men. The loneliness of antique names is the austerity of fame, and only therewith do Milton, Spenser, Chaucer, seem nobly clad and among equals; the nude figure of Shelley at Oxford is symbolical and prophetic of this disencumberment of mortality, the freed soul of the poet,—like Bion, a divine form. Not to speak of those greatest works, the Prayer Book, the Bible, which seem so impersonal in origin as to be the creation of the English tongue itself and the genius of language adoring God; nor of Hakluyt or Clarendon, whose books are all men's actions; how little do the most isolated and seclusive authors, Surrey, Collins, Keats, perpetuate except the pure poet! In these hundred famous books there are few valued for aught more than they contain in themselves, or which require any other light to read them by than what they bring with them; they are rather hampered than helped by the recollection of their authors' careers. Sidney adds lustre to the Arcadia; an exception among men, in this as in all other ways, by virtue of that something supereminent in him which dazzled his own age. But who else of famous authors is greater in his life than in his book? It is the book that gives significance to the man, not the man to the book. These authors would gain by oblivion of themselves, and that in proportion to their greatness, thereby being at once removed into the impersonal region of man's permanent spirit and of art. The exceptions are only seemingly such; it is Johnson's thought and the style of a great mind that preserve Boswell, not his human grossness; and in Pepys it is the mundane and every-day immortality of human nature, this permanently curious and impertinent world, not his own scandal and peepings, that yield him allowance in libraries. In all books to which a nation stands heir, it is man that survives,—the aspect of an epoch, the phase of a religion, the mood of a generation, the taste, sentiment, thought, pursuit, entertainment, of a historic and diversified people. There is nothing accidental in the fact that of these hundred books forty-six bear no author's name upon the title-page; nor is this due merely to the eldest style of printing, as with Chaucer, Gower, Malory, Langland; nor to the inclusion of works by several hands—the Book of Common Prayer, the Mirror for Magistrates, the Tatler, the Spectator, the Reliques, the Federalist; nor to the use of initials, as in the case of Donne and Mrs. Browning. The characteristic is constant. It is interesting to note the names thus self-suppressed: Sackville, Spenser, Bacon, Burton, Browne, Walton, Butler, Dryden, Locke, Defoe, Swift, Pope, Richardson, Gray, Franklin, Goldsmith, Sterne, Smollett, Sheridan, White, Wordsworth, Irving, Austen, Scott, Lamb, Cooper, Carlyle, Emerson, Brontë, Lowell, Tennyson, George Eliot, Fitzgerald.

The broad and various nationality of English literature is a condition precedent to greatness, and underlies its mighty fortune. Its chief glory is its continuity, by which it exceeds the moderns, and must, with ages, surpass antiquity. Literary genius has been so unfailing in the English race that men of this blood live in the error that literature, like light and air, is a common element in the life of populations. Literature is really the work of

[pg xv]

[pg xv]

[pg xv]

[pg xi]

selected nations, and with them is not a constant product. Many nations have no literature, and in fertile nations there are barren centuries. The splendid perpetuity of Greek literature, which covered two thousand years, was yet broken by lean ages, by periods of desert dearth. In the English, beginning from Chaucer (as is just, since he is our Homer, whatever ages went before Troy or Canterbury), there have been reigns without a poet; and Greek example might prepare the mind for Alexandrian and Byzantine periods in the future, were it not for the grand combinations of world-colonies and world-contacts which open new perspectives of time for which the mind, as part of its faith in life, requires destinies as large. The gaps, however, were greatest at the beginning, and grow less. One soil, one government, one evenly unfolded civilization—long life in the settled and peaceful land—contribute to this continuity of literature in the English; but its explanation lies in the integrity of English nurture, and this is essentially the same in all persons of English blood. Homer was not more truly the school of Greece than the Bible has been the school of the English. It has overcome all external change in form, rule and institution, fused conventicle and cathedral, and in dissolving separate and narrow bonds of union has proved the greatest bond of all, and become like a tie of blood. English piety is of one stock, and through every book of holy living where its treasures are laid up, there blows the breath of one Spirit. Herbert and Bunyan are peers of a faith undivided in the hearts of their countrymen. It does not change, but is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. On the secular side, also, English nurture has been of the like simple strain. The instinct of adventure, English derring-do, has never failed. Holinshed and Hakluyt were its chroniclers of old; and from the Morte d'Arthur to Sidney, from the Red-Cross Knight to Ivanhoe, from Shakespeare's Henry to Tennyson's Grenville, genius has not ceased to stream upon it, a broad river of light. The Word of God fed English piety; English daring was fed upon the deeds of men. Hear Shakespeare's Henry: "Plutarch always delights me with a fresh novelty. To love him is to love me; for he has been long time the instructor of my youth. My good mother, to whom I owe all, and who would not wish, she said, to see her son an illustrious dunce, put this book into my hands almost when I was a child at the breast. It has been like my conscience, and has whispered in my ear many good suggestions and maxims for my conduct and the government of my affairs." The English Plutarch is written on the earth's face. Its battles have named the lands and seas of all the world; but, as was said of English piety, from Harold to Cromwell, from the first Conqueror to Wellington, from the Black Prince to Gordon, English daring—the strength of the yeoman, the breath of the noble—is of one stock. Race lasts; those who are born in the eyrie find eagles' food. This has planted iron resolution and all-hazarding courage in epic-drama and battle-ode, and, as in the old riddle, feeds on what it fed. English literature is brave, martial, and brings forth men-children. It has the clarion strength of empire; like Taillefer at Hastings, Drayton and Tennyson still lead the charge at Agincourt and Balaclava. As Shakespeare's Henry was nourished, so was the English spirit in all ages bred. This integrity of English nurture, seen in these two great modes of life turned toward God in the soul and toward the world in action, is as plainly to be discerned in details as in these generalities; and to state only one other broad aspect of the facts governing the continuity of literary genius in the English, but one that goes to the foundations, the condition that both vivifies and controls that genius in law, metaphysics, science, in all political writing, whether history, theory, or discussion, as well as in the creative and artistic modes of its development, is freedom. The freedom of England, which is the parent of its greatness in all ways, is as old in the race as fear of God and love of peril; and, through its manifold and primary operation in English nurture, is the true continuer of its literature.

[pg x]

[pg x]

A second grand trait of English literature that is writ large on these title-pages, is its enormous assimilative power. So great is this that he who would know English must be a scholar in all literatures, and that with no shallow learning. The old figure of the torch handed down from nation to nation, as the type of man's higher life, gives up its full meaning only to the student, and to him it may come to seem that the torch is all and the hand that

[pg x]

bears it dust and ashes; often he finds in its light only the color of his own studies, and names it Greek, Semitic, Hindu, and looks on English, French and Latin as mere carriers of the flame. In so old a symbol there must be profound truth, and it conveys the sense of antiquity in life, of the deathlessness of civilization, and something also of its superhuman origin—the divine gift of fire transmitted from above; but civilization is more than an inheritance, it is a power; and truth is always more than it was; and wherever the torch is lit, its light is the burning of a living race of men. The dependence of the present on the past, of a younger on an older people, of one nation on another, is often misinterpreted and misleads; life cannot be given, but only knowledge, example, direction—influence, but not essence; and the impact of one literature upon another, or of an old historic culture upon a new and ungrown people, is more external than is commonly represented. The genius of a nation born to greatness is irresistible, it remains itself, it does not become another. The Greeks conquered Rome, men say, through the mind; and Rome conquered the barbarians through the mind; but in Gibbon who finds Greece? and the mind of Europe does not bear the ruling stamp of either Byzantine or Italian Rome. In the narrowly temporal and personal view, even under the overwhelming might of Greece, Virgil remained, what Tennyson calls him, "Roman Virgil"; and in the other capital instance of apparently all-conquering literary power, under the truth that went forth from Judea into all lands, Dante remained Italian and Milton English. Yet in these three poets, whose names are synonyms of their countries, the assimilated element is so great that their minds might be said to have been educated abroad.

[pg x]

What is true of Milton is true of the young English mind, from Chaucer and earlier. In the beginning English literature was a part of European literature, and held a position in it analogous to that which the literature of America occupies in all English speech; it was not so much colonial as a part of the same world. The first works were European books written on English soil; Chaucer, Gower and Malory used the matter of Europe, but they retained the tang of English, as Emerson keeps the tang of America. The name applied to Gower, "the moral Gower," speaks him English; and Arthur, "the flower of kings," remains forever Arthur of Britain; and the Canterbury pilgrimage, whatever the source of the world-wandering tales, gives the first crowded scene of English life. In Langland, whose form was mediæval, lay as in the seed the religious and social history of a protestant, democratic, and labor-honoring nation. In the next age, with the intellectual sovereignty of humanism, Surrey, Sackville, Lyly, Sidney and Spenser put all the new realms of letters under tribute, and made capture with a royal hand of whatever they would have for their own of the world's finer wealth; the dramatists gathered again the tales of all nations; and, period following period, Italy, Spain and France in turn, and the Hebrew, Greek and Latin unceasingly, brought their treasures, light or precious, to each generation of authors, until the last great burst of the age now closing, itself indebted most universally to all the past and all the world. Yet each new wave that washed empire to the land retreated, leaving the genius of English unimpaired and richer only in its own strength. Notwithstanding the *concettisti*, the heroic drama, the Celtic mist, which passed like shadows from the kingdom, the instinct of the authors held to the massive sense of Latin and the pure form of Greek and Italian, and constituted these the enduring humane culture of English letters and their academic tradition. The permanence of this tradition in literary education has been of vast importance, and is to the literary class, in so far as they are separate by training, what the integrity of English nurture at large has been to the nation. The poets, especially, have been learned in this culture; and, so far from being self-sprung from the soil, were moulded into power by every finer touch of time. Chaucer, Spenser, Milton, Gray, Shelley, Tennyson are the capital names that illustrate the toil of the scholar, and approve the mastery of that classical culture which has ever been the most fruitful in the choicest minds. As on the broad scale English literature is distinguished by its general assimilative power, being hospitable to all knowledge, it is most deeply and intimately, because continuously, indebted to humane studies, in the strictest sense, and has derived from them not, as in many other cases, transitory matter and the fashion of an hour,

[pg x]

[pg x]

but the form and discipline of art itself. In assimilating this to English nature, literary genius incurred its greatest obligation, and in thereby discovering artistic freedom found its greatest good. This academic tradition has created English culture, which is perhaps best described as an instinctive standard of judgment, and is the necessary complement to that openness of mind that has characterized English literature from the first. Nor is this last word a paradox, but the simple truth, as is plain from the assimilative power here dwelt upon. The English genius is always itself; no element of greatness could inhere in it otherwise; but, in literature, it has had the most open mind of any nation.

[pg x]

A third trait of high distinction in English literature, of which this list is a reminder, and one not unconnected with its continuity and receptivity, is its copiousness. This is not a matter of mere number, of voluminousness; there is an abundance of kinds. In the literature of knowledge, what branch is unfruitful, and in the literature of power, what fountainhead is unstruck by the rod? Only the Italian genius in its prime shows such supreme equality in diversity. How many human interests are exemplified, and how many amply illustrated, exhibiting in a true sense and not by hyperbole myriad-minded man! In the English genius there seems something correspondent to this marvellous efficacy of faculty and expression; it has largeness of power. The trait most commonly thought of in connection with Aristotle as an individual—"master of those who know"—and in connection with mediæval schoolmen as a class, is not less characteristic of the English, though it appears less. The voracity of Chaucer for all literary knowledge, which makes him encyclopædic of a period, is matched at the end of these centuries by Newman, whose capaciousness of intellect was inclusive of all he cared to know. Bacon, in saying, "I take all knowledge to be my province," did not so much make a personal boast as utter a national motto. The great example is, of course, Shakespeare, on whose universality later genius has exhausted metaphor; but for everything that he knew in little, English can show a large literature, and exceeds his comprehensiveness. The fact is best illustrated by adverting to what this list spares. English is rich in translations, and in this sort of exchange the balance of trade is always in favor of the importer. Homer alone is included here,—to except the Bible, which has been so inbred in England as to have become an English book to an eye that clings to the truth through all appearances; but how rich in great national books is a literature that can omit so noble a work, though translated, and one so historic in English, as North's Plutarch! In the literature of knowledge, Greek could hardly have passed over Euclid; but Newton's Principia is here not required. Sir Thomas More is one of the noblest English names, and his Utopia is a memorable book; but it drops from the list. Nor is it names and books only that disappear; but, as these last instances suggest, kinds of literature go out with them. Platonism falls into silence with the pure tones of Vaughan, in whom light seems almost audible; and the mystic Italian fervor of the passional spirit fades with Crashaw. The books of politeness, though descended from Castiglione, depart with Chesterfield, perhaps from some pettiness that had turned courtesy into etiquette; and parody retires with Buckingham. Latin literature was almost rewritten in English during the eighteenth century; but the traces of it here are few. Of inadequate representation, how slight is burlesque in Butler, and the presence of Chevy Chase hardly compensates for the absence of the war-ballad in Drayton and Campbell. So it is with a hundred instances. In another way of illustration, it is to be borne in mind that each author appears by only one title; and while it may be true that commonly each finer spirit stores up his immortality in some one book that is a more perfect vessel of time, yet fecundity is rightly reckoned as a sign of greatness and measure of it in the most, and the production of many books makes a name bulk larger. Mass counts, when in addition to quality; and the greatest have been plentiful writers. No praise can make Gray seem more than a remnant of genius, and no qualification of the verdict can deprive Dryden and Jonson of largeness. It belongs to genius to tire not in creation, thereby imitating the excess of nature flowing from unhusbanded sources. Yet among these hundred books, as in scientific classification, one example must stand for all, except when some folio, like an ark, comes to the rescue of a

[pg xi]

[pg x]

Beaumont and Fletcher. This is cutting the diamond with itself. But within these limits, narrowing circle within circle, what a universe of man remains! Culture after culture, epoch by epoch, are laid bare as in geologic strata,—mediæval tale and history, humanistic form, the Shakespearian age, Puritan, Cavalier, man scientific, reforming, reborn into a new natural, political, artistic world, man modern; and in every layer of imagination and learning lies, whole and entire, a buried English age. It is by virtue of its copiousness that English literature is so representative, both of man's individual spirit in its restless forms of apprehension and embodiment, and of its historic formulation in English progress as national power.

[pg x]

The realization of this long-lived, far-gathering, abounding English literature, in these external phases, leaves untouched its original force. Whence is its germinating power,—what is this genius of the English? It is the same in literature as in all its other manifold manifestations, for man is forever unitary and of one piece. Curiosity, which is the distinction of progressive peoples, is perhaps its initial and moving source. The trait which has sent the English broadcast over the world and mingled their history with the annals of all nations is the same that has so blended their literature with the history of all tongues. The acquisitive power which has created the empire of the English, with dominion on dominion, is parallel with the faculty that assimilates past literatures with the body of their literary speech. But curiosity is only half the word. It is singular that the first quality which occurs to the mind in connection with the English is, almost universally and often exclusively, their practicality. They are really the most romantic of all nations; romanticism is the other half of their genius, and supplements that positive element of knowledge-hunting or truth-seeking which is indicated by their endless curiosity. Possibly the Elizabethan age is generally thought of as a romantic period, as if it were exceptional; and the romantic vigor of the late Georgian period, though everywhere acknowledged, is primarily regarded as more strictly a literary and not a national characteristic in its time; but, like all interesting history, English history was continuously romantic. The days of the crusaders, the Wars of the Roses and the French wars were of the same strain in action and character, in adventurous travel, in personal fate, in contacts, as were the times of Shakespeare's world or of the world of Waterloo. What a reinforcement of character in the English has India been, how restorative of greatness in the blood! It must be that romanticism should characterize a great race, and, when appealing to a positive genius, the greatest race; for in it are all the invitations of destiny. Futurity broods and brings forth in its nest. Romanticism is the lift of life in a people that does not merely continue, but grows, spreads and overcomes. The sphere of the word is not to be too narrowly confined, as only a bookish phrase of polite letters.

[pg x]

In the world of knowledge the pursuit of truth is romantic. The scientific inquirer lives in a realm of strangeness and in the presence of the unknown, in a place so haunted with profound feeling, so electric with the emotions that feed great minds, that whether awe of the unsolved or of the solved be the stronger sentiment he cannot tell; and the appeal made to him—to the explorer in every bodily peril, to the experimenter in the den of untamed forces, to the thinker in his solitude—is often a romantic appeal. The moments of great discoveries are romantic moments, as is seen in Keats's sonnet, lifting Cortez and the star-gazer on equal heights with the reader of the Iliad. The epic of science is a Columbiad without end. Nor is this less true of those branches of knowledge esteemed most dry and prosaic. Locke, Adam Smith, Darwin were all similarly placed with Pythagoras, Aristotle and Copernicus; the mind, society and nature, severally, were their Americas. Even in this age of the mechanical application of forces, which by virtue of the large part of these inventions in daily and world-wide life seems superficially, and is called, a materialistic age, romanticism is paramount and will finally be seen so. Are not these things in our time what Drake and Spanish gold and Virginia, what Clive and the Indies, were to other centuries? It is true that the element of commercial gain blends with other phases of our inventions, and seems a debasement, an

[pg x]

[pg x]



avarice; but so it was in all ages. Nor are the applications of scientific discovery for the material ends of wealth other or relatively greater now than the applications of geographical discovery, for example, to the same ends were in Elizabeth's reign and later. In the first ages commercial gain was in league with the waves from which rose the Odyssey,—a part of that early trading, coasting world, as it was always a part of the artistic world of Athens. Gain in any of its material forms, whether wealth, power or rank, does not debase the knowledge, the courage of heart, the skill of hand and brain, from which it flows, for it is their natural and proper fruit; nor does it by itself materialize either the man or the nation, else civilization were doomed from the start, and the pursuit of truth would end in humiliation and ignominy. It is rather the attitude of mind toward this new world of knowledge and this spectacle of man now imperializing through nature's forces, as formerly through discovery of the earth's lands and seas, that makes the character of our age. Romanticism, being the enveloping mood in whose atmosphere the spirit of man beholds life, and, as it were, the light on things, changes its aspect in the process of the ages with the emergence of each new world of man's era; and as it once inhered in English loyalty and the piety of Christ's sepulchre, and in English voyaging over-seas and colonizing of the lands, it now inheres in the conquest of natural force for the arts of peace. The present age exceeds its predecessors in marvel in proportion as the victories of the intellect are in a world of finer secrecy than any horizon veils, and build an empire of greater breadth and endurance than any monarch or sovereign people or domineering race selfishly achieves; its victories are in the unseen of force and thought, and it brings among men the undecaying empire of knowledge, as inexpugnable as the mind in man and as inappropriable as light and air. Here, as elsewhere, it is the sensual eye that sees the sensual thing, but the spiritual eye spiritually discerns. It is romance that adds this "precious seeing" to the eye. Openness to the call, capability of the passion, and character, so sensitized and moulded in individuals and made hereditary in a civilization and a race and idealized in conscience, constitute the motor-genius of a nation, which is its finding faculty; and the appreciation of results and putting them to the use of men make its conserving and positive power. These two, indistinguishably married and blended, are the English genius. A positive genius following a romantic lead, a romantic genius yielding a positive good, equally describe it from opposed points of view; yet in the finer spirits and in the long age the romantic temperament is felt to be the fertilizing element, to be character as opposed to performance. Greatness lies always in the unaccomplished deed, as in the lonely anecdote of Newton: "I do not know what I may appear to the world, but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the seashore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble, or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me." So Tennyson with his "wages of going on," and Sir John Franklin and Gordon in their lives. This spiritual breath of the nation in all its activities through centuries is the breath of its literature, there embodied in its finer being and applied to the highest uses for the civilization and culture of the nation by truth and art. In English literary history, and in its men of genius taken individually, the positive or the romantic may predominate, each in its own moment; but the conspectus of the whole assigns to each its true levels. Romanticism condensed in character, which is the creation of the highest poetic genius, the rarest work of man, has its illustrative example in Shakespeare, the first of all writers; he followed it through all its modes, and perhaps its simplest types are Henry IV for action, Romeo for passion, and Hamlet, which is the romance of thought. Before Shakespeare, Spenser closed the earliest age, which had been shaped by a diffused romantic tradition, inherited from mediævalism, though in its later career masked under Renaissance forms; and since Shakespeare, a similar diffused romantic prescience, in the region of the common life and of revolutionary causes most significantly, brought in our age that has now passed its first flower, but has yet long to run. These are the three great ages of English poetry. In the interval between the second and the third, the magnificently accomplished school of the eighteenth century gave to English an age of cultivated repose, in which Pope, its best example, lived on the incomes of the past, and, together with the younger and the

[pg x]

[pg x]

[pg x]

elder men he knew, exhibited in literature that conserving and positive power which is the economy of national genius; but even in that great century, wherever the future woke, there was a budding romanticism, in Collins, Gray, Walpole, Thomson, Cowper, Blake. Such was the history of English poetry, and the same general statement will be found applicable to English prose, though in a lower tone, due to the nature of prose. Taken in the large, important as the positive element in it is, the English literary genius is, like the race, temperamentally romantic, to the nerve and bone.

This view becomes increasingly apparent on examination of the service of this literature to civilization and the individual soul of man, which is the great function of literature, and of its place in the world of art.

"How shall the world be served?" was Chaucer's question; and it has never been absent from any great mind of the English stock. The literature of a nation, however, including, as here, books of knowledge, is so nearly synonymous with the mind in all its operations in the national life, as to be coextensive with civilization, and hardly separable from it. Civilization is cast in the mould of thought, and retains the brute necessity of nature only as mass, but not as surface; it is the flowering of human forces in the formal aspect of life, and of these literature is one mode, reflecting in its many phases all the rest in their manifestations, and inwardly feeding them in their vital principle. The universality of its touch on life is indicated by the fact that it has made the English a lettered people, the alphabet as common as numbers, and the ability to read almost as wide-spread in the race as the ability to count. Its service, therefore, cannot be summarized any more than the dictionary of its words. It is possible to bring within the compass of a paragraph only hints and guide-marks of its work; and naturally these would be gathered from its most comprehensive influences in the higher spheres of intellect and morals, in the world of ideas, and in the person of those writers who were either the founders or restorers of knowledge. Such a cardinal service was the Baconian method, to take a single great instance, which may almost be said to have reversed the logical habit of the mind of Europe, and to have summoned nature to a new bar. It is enough to name this. Of books powerful in intellectual results, Locke's Essay is, perhaps, thought of as metaphysical and remote, yet it was of immeasurable influence at home and abroad, so subtly penetrating as to resemble in scale and intimacy the silent forces of nature. It was great as a representative of the spirit of rationalism, which it supported and spread with incalculable results on the temper of educated Europe; and great also as a product and embodiment of that cold, intellectual habit, distinctive of a certain kind of English mind, and usually regarded as radical in the race. It was great by the variety as well as the range of its influence, and was felt in all regions of abstract thought and those practical arts, education, government and the like, then most affected by such thought; it permanently modified the cast of men's minds. In opposition to it new philosophical movements found their mainspring. A similar honor belongs to Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* in another century. It is customary to eulogize the pioneer, and to credit the first openers of Californias with the wealth of all the mines worked by later comers; and, in this sense, the words of Buckle, that have been placed opposite the title-page, are, perhaps, to be taken: "Adam Smith contributed more, by the publication of this single work, towards the happiness of men than has been effected by the united abilities of all the statesmen and legislators of whom history has preserved an authentic account." But the excess of the statement is a proof of the largeness of the truth it contains, and like-minded praise is not from Buckle alone, but may be found in half a score of thoughtful and temperate authors. In the last age, Darwin, by his *Origin of Species*, most arrested the attention of the scientific mind, and stimulated the highly educated world with surprise. He was classed with Copernicus, as having brought man's pretension to be the first of created things, and their lord from the beginning, under the destroying criticism of scientific time and its order, in the same way that Copernicus brought the pretension of the earth to be the centre of the universe under a like criticism of scientific space and its order;

[pg x]

[pg x]

[pg x]

and in these proud statements there is some measure of truth. The ideas of Darwin compel a readjustment of man's thoughts with regard to his temporal and natural relation to the universe in which he finds himself; and the vast generalities of all evolutionary thought received from Darwin immense stimulus, its method greater scope, and its results a firmer hold on the general mind, with an influence still unfathomable upon man's highest beliefs with regard to his origin and destiny. There are epochs in the intellectual history of the race as marked as those of the globe; and such works as these, in the literature of knowledge, show the times of the opening of the seals.

In addition to the service so done in the advancement of civilization by the discovery of new truth, as great benefaction is accomplished by the continual agitation and exercise of men's minds in the ideas that are not new but the ever-living inheritance from the past, whose permanence through all epochs shows their deep grounding in the race they nourish. In English such ideas are, especially, in the view of the whole world, ideas of civil and religious liberty in the widest sense and particularly as worked out in legal and political history. The common law of England in Blackstone is a mighty legacy. On the large public scale, and as involved in the constitutional making of a great nation, the Federalist is a document invaluable as setting forth essentials of free government under a particular application; and for comment on social liberty, Burke, on the conservative, and Paine, on the radical side, exhibit the scope, the weight and fire of English thought. Of still greater significance, for the mass and variety of teaching, is that commentary on man's freedom which is contained in the operation of liberty and its increase as presented in the long story of England's greatness recorded in the works of her historians from Holinshed to Macaulay, with what the last prolific generation has added. They are exceeded in the dignity of their labors by Gibbon, whose work on Rome, which Mommsen called the greatest of all histories and is often likened to a mighty bridge spanning the gulf between the ancient and the modern world, was a contribution to European learning; but the historians of English liberty have more profitably served mankind. At yet another remove, the ideas of liberty—and the mind acquainted with English books is dazzled by the vast comprehensiveness of such a phrase—are again poured through the nation's life-blood by all her poets, and well-nigh all her writers in prose, in one or another mode of the Promethean fire. These ideas are never silent, never quiescent; they work in the substance, they shape the form and feature, of English thought; they are the necessary element of its being; they constitute the race of freemen, and are known in every language as English ideas. They give sublimity to the figure of Milton; they are the feeding flame of Shelley's mind; they alone lift Tennyson to an eagle-flight of song. In the unceasing celebration of ideal liberty, and its practical life in English character and events, the literature of England has, perhaps, done a greater service than in the positive advancement of knowledge, for it is more fundamental in the national life. Touching the subject almost at random, such are a few of the points of contact between English books and the civilization of men.

It is still more difficult to state briefly the action of literature on the individual for what is more distinctly his private gain, in the enlargement of his life, the direction of his thoughts, and bringing him into harmony with the world. As, in regard to civilization, the emphasis lay rather on the literature of knowledge, here it lies on the literature of power,—on imaginative and reflective works. Its initial office is educative; it feeds the imagination and the powers of sympathy, and trains not only the affections but all feeling; and in these fields it is the only instrument of education outside of real experience. It is this that gives it such primacy as to make acquaintance with humane letters almost synonymous with culture. No actual world is large enough for a man to live in; at the lowest, there is some tradition of the past, some expectation of the future; and, though training in the senses is an important part of early life, yet the greater part of education consists in putting the young in possession of an unseen world. The biograph is a marvellous toy of the time, but literature in its lower forms of

[pg x]

[pg xl]

[pg xl]

information, of history, travel and description, has been a biograph for the mind's eye from the beginning; and in its higher forms of art it performs a greater service by bringing into mental vision what it is above the power of nature to produce. To expand the mind to the compass of space and time, and to people these with the thoughts of mankind, to revive the past and penetrate the reality of the present, is the joint work of all literature; and as a preparation for individual life, in unfolding the faculties and the feelings, humane letters achieve their most essential task. Literature furnishes the gymnasia for all youth, in that part of their nature in which the highest power of humanity lies. But this is only, as was said, its initial office. Throughout life it acts in the same way on old and young alike. The dependence of all men on thought, and of thought on speech, is a profound matter, though as little considered as gravitation that keeps the world entire; and the speech on which such a strain of life lies is the speech of books. How has Longfellow consoled middle life in its human trials, how has Carlyle roused manhood, and Emerson illumined life for his readers at every stage! Scott is a benefactor of millions by virtue of the entertainment he has given to English homes and the lonely hours of his fellow-men, now for three generations, to an extent hardly measurable in thought; and so in hardly a less degree is Dickens, and, though diminishing in inclusive power, are Thackeray, Austen, Brontë, Cooper, Hawthorne, George Eliot, to name only novelists. Each century has had its own story-telling from Chaucer down, though masked in the Elizabethan period as drama, and in each much hearty and refined pleasure has been afforded by the spectacle of life in books; but in the last age the benefit so conferred is to be reckoned among the greater blessings of civilization. It is singular that humor, so prime and constant a factor in English, should have so few books altogether its own, and these not of the greater class; but the spirit which yields burlesque in Butler and Irving, and comedy in Massinger, Congreve and Sheridan, pervades the body of English literature and characterizes it among national literatures. The highest mind is incomplete without humor, for a perfect idealism includes laughter at the real; and it is natural, for, the principle of humor being incongruity to the intellect, it is properly most keen in those in whom the idea of order, which is the mother-idea of the intellect, is most omnipresent and controlling; but as humor is thus auxiliary in character, it is found to be subordinate also in English literature as a whole. The constancy of its presence, however, is a sign of the general health of the English genius, which has turned to morbidity far less than that of other nations ancient or modern. It is a cognate fact, here, that great books are never frivolous; they leave the reader wiser and better, as well through laughter as through tears, or they sustain imaginative and sympathetic power already acquired. They open the world of humanity to the heart, and they open the heart to itself. In another region, not primarily of entertainment, the value of literature lies in its function to inspire. In individual life, each finer spirit of the past touches with an electric force those of his own kindred as they are born into the world of letters, and often for life. The later poets have most personal power in this way. Burns, Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley have been the inspiration of lives, like Carlyle and Emerson in prose. The most intense example of national inspiration in a book is *Uncle Tom's Cabin*; but in quieter ways Scotland feels the pulse of Burns, and England the many-mingled throbbing of the poets in her blood.

[pg xl]

[pg xl]

[pg xl]

On the large scale, in the impact of literature on the individual soul and through that on the national belief, aspiration and resolve, the great sphere of influence lies necessarily in the religious life, because that is universal and constant from birth to death and spreads among the secret springs and sources of man's essential nature. It is a commonplace, it has sometimes been made a reproach, that English literature is predominantly moral and religious, and the fact is plainly so. The strain that began with *Piers Plowman* flourished more mightily in the *Pilgrim's Progress*. The psalm-note that was a tone of character in Surrey, Wyatt and Sidney gave perfect song in Milton, both poet and man. From Butler to Newman the intellect, applied to religion, did not fail in strenuous power. Taylor's *Holy Living* is a saint's book. If religious poets, of one pure strain of Sabbath melody, have been

rare, yet Herbert, Vaughan, Cowper, Keble, Whittier are to the memory Christian names, with the humility and breathing peace of sacred song. The portion of English literature expressly religious is enlarged by the works of authors, both in prose and verse, in which religion was an occasional theme and often greatly dealt with; and the religious and moral influence of the body of literature as a whole on the English race is immensely increased by those writers into whom the Christian spirit entered as a master-light of reason and imagination, such as Spenser in the *Faërie Queene* and Wordsworth in his works generally, or Gray in the solemn thought of the *Elegy*. To particularize is an endless task; for the sense of duty toward man and God is of the bone and flesh of English books in every age, being planted in the English nature. This vast mass of experience and counsel, of praise and prayer, of insight and leading, variously responding to every phase of the religious consciousness of the historic people, has been, like the general harvest, the daily food of the nation in its spiritual life. If Shakespeare is the greatest of our writers, the English Bible is the greatest of our books; and the whole matter is summarized in saying that the Bible, together with the Book of Common Prayer, is the most widely distributed, the most universally influential, the most generally valued and best-read book of the English people, and this has been true since the diffusion of printing. It may seem only the felicity of time that the English language best adorns its best book; but it is by a higher blessing that English character centres in this Book, that English thinkers see by it, that English poets feel by it, that the English people live by it; for it has passed into the blood of all English veins.

[pg xl]

[pg xl]

It is natural to inquire, after dwelling so much on the practical power of English literature in society and life, what is its value in the world of art, in that sphere where questions of perfection in the form, of permanence in the matter, and the like, arise. If the standards of an academic classicism be applied, English literature will fall below both Latin and Greek, and the Italian and French, and take a lower place with German and Spanish, to which it is most akin. But such standards are pseudo-classical at best, and under modern criticism find less ground in the ancients. The genius of the English is romantic, and originated romantic forms proper to itself, and by these it should be judged. The time is, perhaps, not wholly gone by when the formlessness of Shakespeare may be found spoken of as a matter of course, as the formlessness of Shelley is still generally alleged; but if neither of these has form in the pseudo-classic, the Italian and French, sense of convention, decorum and limit, they were creators of that romantic form in which English, together with Spanish, marks the furthest original modern advance. The subject is too large, and too much a matter of detail, for this place; but it is the less necessary to expand it, for it is as superfluous to establish the right of Shakespeare in the realm of the most perfect art as to examine the title-deeds of Alexander's conquests. He condensed romanticism in character, as was said above; and in the power with which he did this, in the wisdom, beauty and splendor of his achievement, excelled all others, both for substance and art. The instinct of fame may be safely followed in assigning a like primacy to Milton. The moment which Milton occupied, in the climax of a literary movement, is, perhaps, not commonly observed with accuracy. The drama developed out of allegorical and abstract, and through historical, into entirely human and ideal forms; and in Shakespeare this process is completed. The same movement, on the religious as opposed to the secular line, took place more slowly. Spenser, like Sackville, works by impersonation of moral qualities, viewed abstractly; the Fletchers, who carried on his tradition, employ the same method, which gives a remote and often fantastic character to their work; nor was moral and religious poetic narrative truly humanized, and given ideal power in character and event, until Milton carried it to its proper artistic culmination in *Paradise Lost*. Milton stands to the evolution of this branch of poetic literature, springing from the miracle-plays, precisely as Shakespeare does to the branch of ideal drama; and thus, although he fell outside of the great age, and was sixty years later than Shakespeare in completing the work, the singularity of his literary greatness, his loneliness as a lofty genius in his time, becomes somewhat less inexplicable. The *Paradise Lost* occupies this moment of climax, to repeat the phrase, in

[pg xl]

[pg xl]

literary history, and, like nearly all works in such circumstances, it has a greatness all its own. But, beyond that, it lies in a region of art where no other English work companions it, as an epic of the romantic spirit such as Italy most boasts of, but superior in breadth, in ethical power, in human interest, to Ariosto or Tasso, and comparing with them as Pindar with the Alexandrians; it realized Hell and Eden, and the world of heavenly war and the temptation, to the vision of men, with tremendous imaginative power, stamping them into the race-mind as permanent imagery; and the literary kinship which the workmanship bears to what is most excellent and shining in the great works of Greece, Rome and Italy, as well as to Hebraic grandeur, helps to place the poem in that remoter air which is an association of the mind with all art. No other English poem has a similar brilliancy, aloofness and perfection, as of something existing in another element, except the Adonais. In it personal lyricism achieved the most impersonal of elegies, and mingled the fairest dreams of changeful imaginative grief with the soul's intellectual passion for immortality full-voiced. It is detached from time and place; the hunger of the soul for eternity, which is its substance, human nature can never lay off; its literary kinship is with what is most lovely in the idyllic melody of the antique; and, owing to its small scale and the simple unity of its mood, it gives forth the perpetual charm of literary form in great purity. These two poems stand alone with Shakespeare's plays, and are for epic and lyric what his work is for drama, the height of English performance in the cultivation of romance. Other poets must be judged to have attained excellence in romantic art in proportion as they reveal the qualities of Shakespeare, Milton and Shelley; for these three are the masters of romantic form, which, being the spirit of life proceeding from within outward, is the vital structure of English poetic genius. This internal power is also a principle of classic art in its antique examples; but academic criticism developed from them a hardened formalism to which romantic art is related as the spirit of life to the death-mask of the past. Such pallor has from time to time crossed the features of English letters in a man or an age, and has brought a marble dignity, as to Landor, or the shadow of an Augustan elegance, as in the era of Pope; but it has faded and passed away under the flush of new life. Even in prose, in which so-called classic qualities are still sought by academic taste, the genius of English has shown a native obstinacy. The novel is so Protean in form as to seem amorphous, but essentially repeats the drama, and submits in its masters to Shakespearian parallelism; in substance and manner it has been overwhelmingly of a romantic cast; and in the other forms of prose, style, though of all varieties, has, perhaps, proved most preservative when highly colored, individualized, and touched with imaginative greatness, as in Browne, Taylor, Milton, Bunyan, Burke, Carlyle, Macaulay; but the inferiority of their matter, it should be observed, affects the endurance of the eighteenth-century prose masters—Steele, Addison, Swift and Johnson, to name the foremost. Commonly, it must be allowed, English, both prose and poetry, notwithstanding its triumphs, is valued for substance and not for form, whether this be due to a natural incapacity, or to a retardation in development which may hereafter be overcome, or to the fact that the richness of the substance renders the fineness of the form less eminent.

[pg xl]

[pg l]

In conclusion, the thought rises of itself, will this continuity, assimilative power, and copiousness, this original genius, this serviceableness to civilization and the private life, this supreme romantic art, be maintained, now that the English and their speech are spread through the world, or is the history of the intellectual expansion of Athens and Rome, the moral expansion of Jerusalem, to be repeated? The saying of Shelley, "The mind in creation is a fading coal," seems to be true of nations. Great literatures, or periods in them, have usually marked the culmination of national power; and if they "look before and after," as Virgil in the *Æneid*, they gather their wisdom, as he too did, by a gaze reverted to the past. The paradox of progress, in that the *laudator temporis acti* is always found among the best and noblest of the elders, while yet the whole world of man ever moves on to greater knowledge, power and good, continues like the riddle of the Sphinx; but time seems unalterably in favor of mankind through all dark prophecies. The mystery of genius is

[pg li]

unsolved; and the Messianic hope that a child may be born unto the people always remains; but the greatness of a nation dies only with that genius which is not a form of human greatness in individuals, but is shared by all of the blood, and constitutes them fellow-countrymen. The genius of the English shows no sign of decay; age has followed age, each more gloriously, and whether the period that is now closing be really an end or only the initial movement of a vaster arc of time, corresponding to the greater English destiny, world-wide, world-peopling, world-freeing, the arc of the movement of democracy through the next ages,—is immaterial; so long as the genius of the people, its piety and daring, its finding faculty for truth, its creative shaping in art, be still integral and vital, so long as its spiritual passion be fed from those human and divine ideas whose abundance is not lessened, and on those heroic tasks which a world still half discovered and partially subdued opens through the whole range of action and of the intellectual and moral life,—so long as these things endure, English speech must still be fruitful in great ages of literature, as in the past these have been its fountainheads. But if no more were to be written on the page of English, yet what is written there, contained and handed down in famous books and made the spiritual food of the vast multitude whose children's children shall use and read the English tongue through coming centuries under every sky, will constitute a moral dominion to which Virgil's line may proudly apply —

[pg lii]

His ego nec metas rerum nec tempora pono:

Imperium sine fine dedi.

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## *One Hundred Books Famous in English Literature*

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Dan Chaucer, the first warbler, whose sweet breath

[pg 2]

Preluded those melodious bursts that fill

The spacious times of great Elizabeth

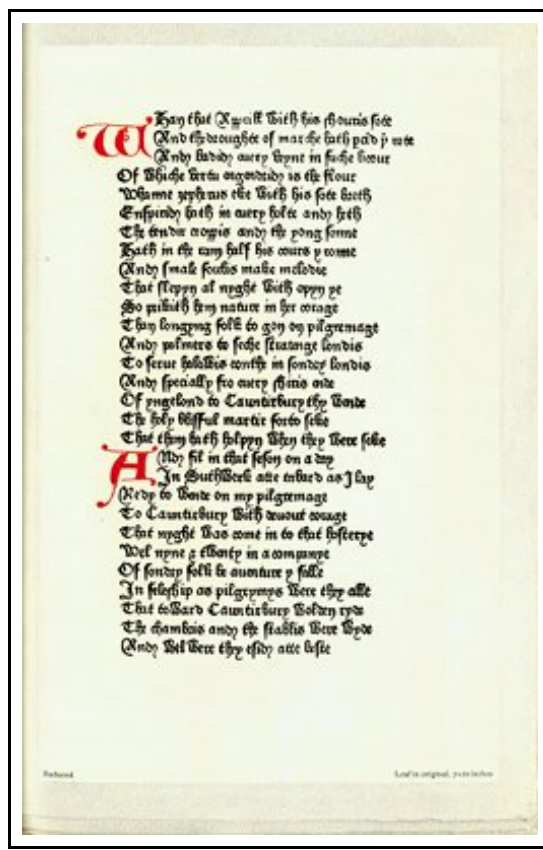
With sounds that echo still.

TENNYSON

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[pg 3]



Whan that Apprill with his shouris sote  
 And the droughte of marche hath pa'd [.y]  
     rote  
 And badid euery veyne in suche licour  
 Of whiche vertu engendrid is the flour  
 Whanne zepherus eke with his sote breth  
 Enspirid hath in euery holte and heth  
 The tendir croppis and the yong sonne  
 Hath in the ram half his cours y conne  
 And smale foulis make melodie  
 That slepyn al nyght with opyn ye  
 So prikith hem nature in her corage  
 Than longyng folk to gon on pilgrmage  
 And palmers to seche straunge londis  
 To serue halowis couthe in sondry londis



And specially fro euery shiris ende  
Of yngelond to Cauntirbury thy wende  
The holy blisful martir for to seke  
That them hath holpyn when they were  
seke  
And fil in that seson on a day  
In Suthwerk atte tabard as I lay  
Redy to wende on my pilgrimage  
To Cauntirbury with deuout corage  
That nyght was come in to that hosterye  
Wel nyne & twenty in a companye  
Of sondry folk be auenture y falle  
In feleship as pilgrymys were they alle  
That toward Cauntirbury wolden ryde  
The chambris and the stablis were wyde  
And wel were they esid atte beste

Reduced

Leaf in original, 7 × 10 inches

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O moral Gower

[pg 4]

CHAUCER

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[pg 5]



This book is intituled confessio  
amantis / that is to saye  
in englysshe the confessyon of  
the louer maad and compyled by  
Johan Gower squyer borne in walys  
in the tyme of kyng richard the second  
which book treteth how he was confessyd  
to Genyus preest of venus vpon  
the causes of loue in his fyue wyttes  
and seuen dedely synnes / as in thys  
sayd book al alonge appyereth / and by  
cause there been comprysed therein dyuers  
hystories and fables towchyng  
euery matere / I haue ordeyned a table

here folowyng of al suche hystories  
and fables where and in what book  
and leef they stande in as here after  
foloweth  
¶ Fyrst the prologue how johan gower  
in the xvi yere of kyng rychard the  
second began to make thys book and  
dyrected to harry of lancastre thenne  
erle of derby folio ¶ ii  
Of thestate of the royames temporally  
the sayd yere folio ¶ iii  
Of thestate of the clergye the tyme of  
robert gylbonensis namyng hym self  
clemente thenne antipope folio ¶ iv  
Of the estate of the comyn people  
folio ¶ v  
How he treteth of the ymage that  
nabugodonosor  
sawe in his sleep hauyng  
an heed of golde / a breste of syluer / a  
bely of brasse / legges of yron / and  
feet haffe yron & halfe erthe folio vi  
Of thenterpretacion of the dreame / and  
how the world was fyrst of golde / &  
after alwey werse & werse folio vii  
¶ Thus endeth the prologue  
¶ Here begynneth the book  
And fyrst the auctor nameth thys  
book confessio amantis / that is to say

the shryfte of the loue / wheron alle

thys book shal shewe not onely the

loue humayn / but also of alle lyuyng

beestys naturally folio ¶ ix

How cupydo smote Johan Gower

with a fyry arowe and wounded hym

so that venus commysed to hym genyus

hyr preest for to here hys confessyon

folio ¶ x

How Genyus beyng sette / the loue

knelyng tofore hym prayeth the sayd

confessor to appose hym in his  
confessyon

folio ¶ xi

The confessyon of the amant of two

of the pryncipallist of his fyue wyttes

folio ¶ xi

How atheon for lokyng vpon Deane

was turned in to an herte folio ¶ xi

Of phorceus and hys thre doughters

whiche had but one eye / & how phorceus

slewe them folio ¶ xii

How the serpente that bereth the  
charbuncle

stoppeth his one ere wyth hys

tayle and that other wyth the erthe

whan he is enchaunted folio ¶ xii

How vlyxes escaped fro the marmaydys

by stoppyng of hys eerys

folio ¶ xii

Here foloweth that there ben vii dedely

synnes / of whome the fyrste is

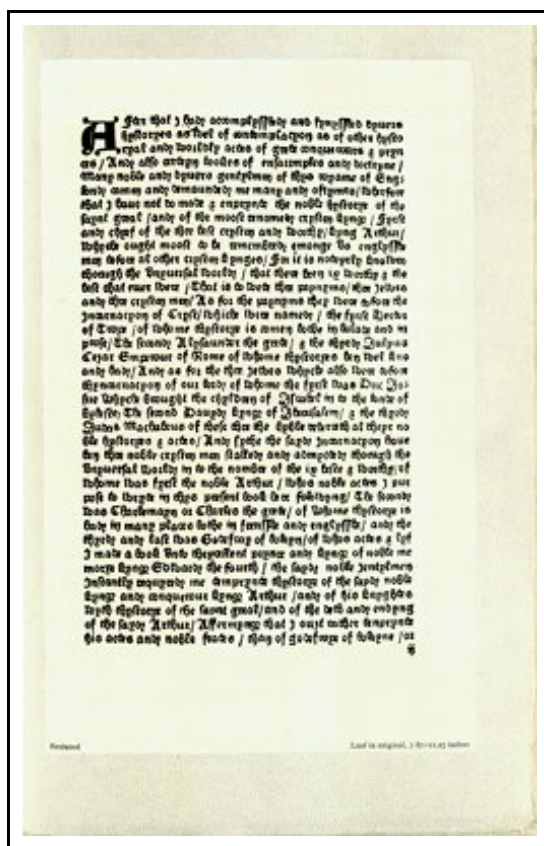
Reduced

Leaf in original, 8.68 × 12.75 inches.

Flos regum Arthurus

[pg 6]

JOHN OF EXETER



[pg 7]

After that I had accomplysshed and fynysshed  
dyuers hystories as wel of contemplacyon as of  
other hystorial and worldly actes of grete  
conquerours & prynces / And also certeyn bookes of  
ensaumples and doctryne / Many noble and dyuers  
gentylmen of thys royaume of Englund camen and  
demaunded me many and oftymes / wherfore that j

haue not do made & enprynte the noble hystorye of the saynt greal / and of the moost renommed crysten kyng / Fyrst and chyef of the thre best crysten and worthy / kyng Arthur / whyche ought moost to be remembred emonge vs englysshe men tofore al other crysten kynges / For it is notoyrly knowen thorough the vnyuersal world / that there been ix worthy & the best that euer were / That is to wete thre paynims / thre jewes and thre crysten men / As for the paynims they were tofore the jncarnacyon of Cryst / whiche were named / the fyrst Hector of Troye / of whome thystorye is comen bothe in balade and in prose / The second Alysaunder the grete / & the thyrd Julyus Cezar Emperour of Rome of whome thystories ben wel kno and had / And as for the thre jewes whyche also were tofore thyncarnacyon of our lord of whome the fyrst was Duc Josue whyche brought the chyldren of Israhel in to the londe of byheste / The second Dauyd kyng of Jherusalem / & the thyrd Judas Machabeus of these thre the byble reherceth al theyr noble hystories & actes / And sythe the sayd jncarnacyon haue ben thre noble crysten men stalled and admytted thorough the vnyuersal world in to the nombre of the ix beste & worthy / of whome was fyrst the noble Arthur / whos noble actes j purpose to wryte in thys present book here folowyng / The second was Charlemayn or Charles the grete / of whome thystorye is had in many places bothe in frensshe and englysshe / and the thyrd and last was Godefray of boloyne / of whos actes & lyf j made a book vnto the excellent prynce and kyng of noble memorye kyng Edward the fourth / the sayd noble jentylmen jnstantly requyred me temprynte thystorye of the sayd noble kyng and conquerour kyng Arthur / and of his knyghtes wyth thystorye of the saynt greal / and of the deth and endyng of the sayd Arthur / Affermyng that j ouzt rather tenprynte his actes and noble feates / than of godefroye of boloyne / or

Reduced

Leaf in original, 7.87 × 11.25 inches.

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So judiciously contrived that the wisest may exercise at once their knowledge and devotion; its ceremonies few and innocent; its language significant and perspicuous; most of the words and phrases being taken out of the Holy Scriptures and the rest are the expressions of the first and purest ages.

COMBER

[pg 8]



Reduced

Leaf in original, 7 × 10.5 inches

THE  
 booke of the common praier  
 and administracion of the  
 Sacramentes, and  
 other rites and  
 ceremonies  
 of the  
 Church: after the  
 vse of the Church of  
 Englande.

LONDINI, in officina Richardi Graftoni,  
 Regij impressoris.

Cum priuilegio ad imprimendum solum.

Anno Domini. M.D.XLIX.

Mense Martij.

Reduced

Leaf in original 7 × 10.5 inches.

The author of *Piers Ploughman*, no doubt, embodied in a poetic dress just what millions felt. His poem as truly expressed the popular sentiment on the subjects it discussed as did the American Declaration of Independence the national thought and feeling on the relations between the Colonies and Great Britain. Its dialect, its tone and its poetic dress alike conspired to secure to the *Vision* a wide circulation among the commonalty of the realm, and by formulating—to use a favorite word of the day—sentiments almost universally felt, though but dimly apprehended, it brought them into distinct consciousness, and thus prepared the English people for the reception of the seed which the labors of Wycliffe and his converts were already sowing among them.

[pg 10]

MARSH



[pg 11]

## THE VISION

*of Pierce Plowman, now  
fyrste imprynted by Roberte  
Crowley, dwellyng in Ely  
tentes in Holburne.*



Anno Domini.

1550.

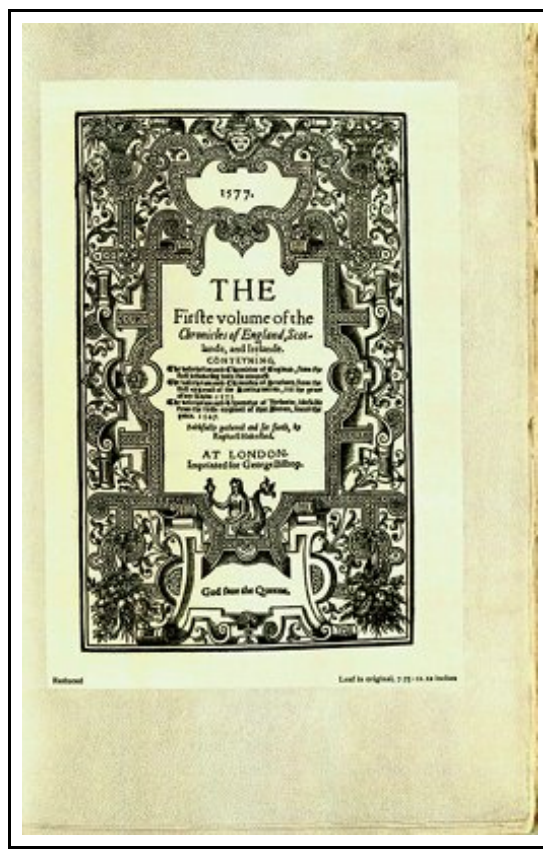
*Cum priuilegio ad imprimendū  
solum.*

By far the most important of our historical records, in print, during the  
time of Queen Elizabeth.

[pg 12]

DIBDIN

[pg 13]



1577.

**THE**  
Firste volume of the  
*Chronicles of England, Scotlande,  
and Irelande.*

## CONTEYNING,

*The description and Chronicles of England,  
from the first inhabiting vnto the conquest*

*The description and Chronicles of Scotland,  
from the first originall of the Scottes nation,  
till the yeare of our Lorde. 1571.*

*The description and Chronicles of Yrelande,  
likewise from the firste originall of that  
Nation, vntill the yeare. 1547.*

*Faithfully gathered and set forth, by  
Raphaell Holinshed.*

AT LONDON,  
Imprinted for George Bishop.

God saue the Queene.

Reduced

Leaf in original, 7.75 11.12 inches

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Our historic plays are allowed to have been founded on the heroic narratives in the Mirror for Magistrates; to that plan, and to the boldness of Lord Buckhurst's new scenes, perhaps we owe Shakespeare.

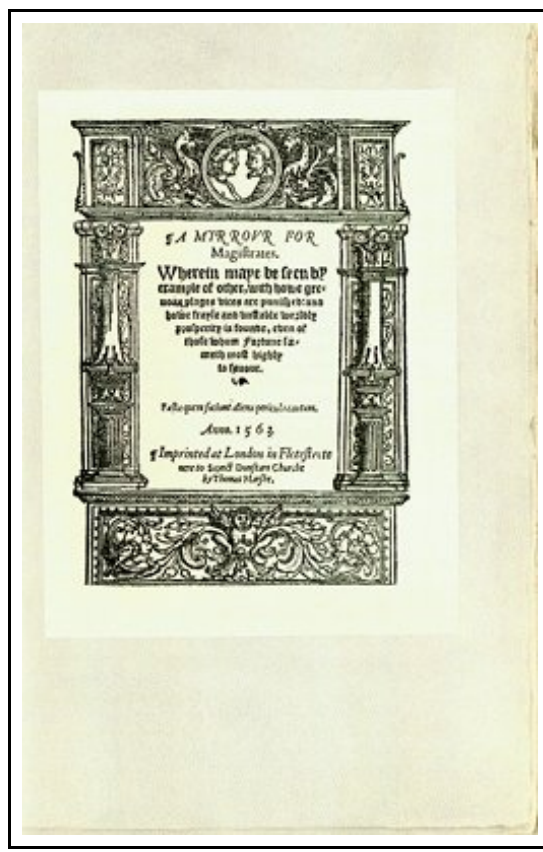
[pg 14

WALPOLE

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[pg 14



**A MYRROVR FOR  
Magistrates.**

*Wherein maye be seen by  
example of other, with howe greuous  
plages vices are punished: and  
howe frayle and vnstable werldly  
prosperity is founde, even of  
those whom Fortune seemeth  
most highly  
to fauour.*

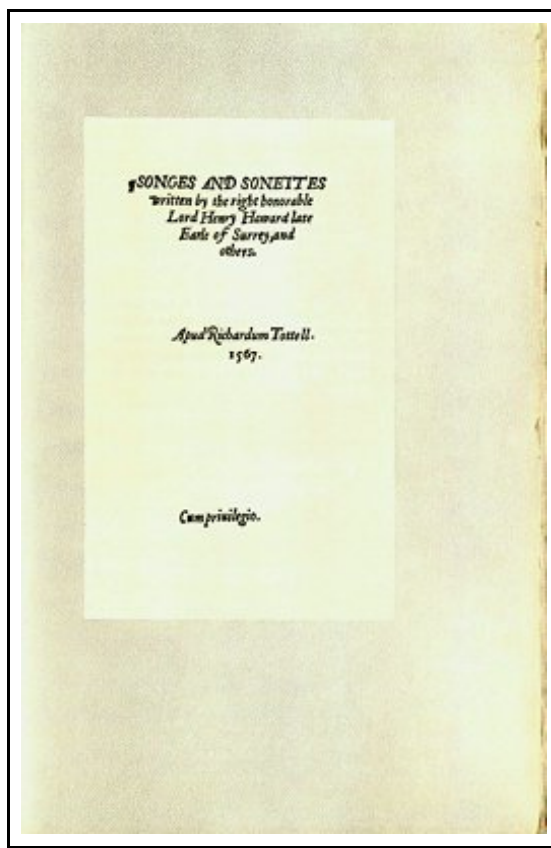
*Fælix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum.*

*Anno. 1 5 6 3.*

*Imprinted at London in Fletestrete  
nere to Saynct Dunstans Church  
by Thomas Marshe.*

stately measures and stile of Italian Poesie, as novices newly crept out of the schooles of Dante, Arioste, and Petrarch, they greatly polished our rude and homely maner of vulgar Poesie, from that it had bene before, and for that cause may justly be sayd the first reformers of our English meetre and stile.

PUTTENHAM



[pg 17]

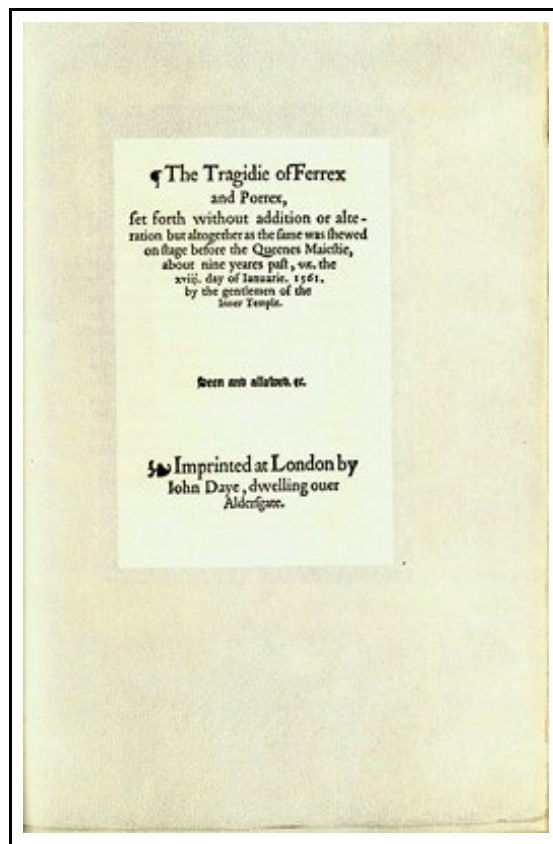
SONGES AND SONETTES  
*Written by the right honorable  
 Lord Henry Haward late  
 Earle of Surrey, and  
 others.*  
*Apud Richardum Tottell.*  
 1567.  
*Cum priuilegio.*

It is full of stately speeches, and well-sounding phrases, clymyng to the height of

[pg 18]

Seneca his stile, and as full of notable moralitie, which it doth most delightfully teach, and so obtayne the very end of Poesie.

SIDNEY



[pg 19

**¶ The Tragidie of Ferrex  
and Porrex,**

set forth without addition or alteration  
but altogether as the same was shewed  
on stage before the Queenes Maiestie,  
about nine yeares past, vz. the  
xviij. day of Ianuarie. 1561.  
by the gentlemen of the  
Inner Temple.

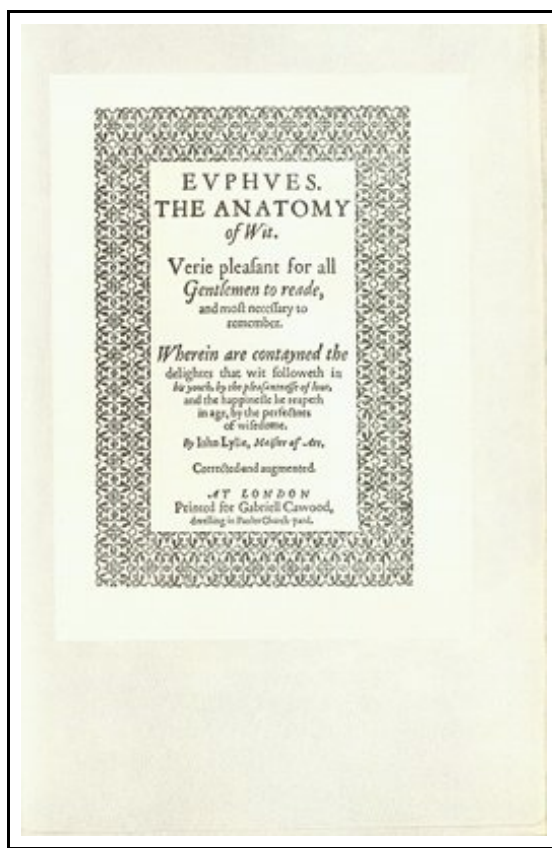
*Seen and allowed, &c.*

Imprinted at London by  
Iohn Daye, dwelling ouer  
Aldersgate.

These papers of his lay like dead lawrels in a churchyard; but I have gathered the scattered branches up, and by a charme, gotten from Apollo, made them greene againe and set them up as epitaphes to his memory. A sinne it were to suffer these rare monuments of wit to lye covered in dust and a shame such conceived comedies should be acted by none but wormes. Oblivion shall not so trample on a sonne of the Muses; and such a sonne as they called their darling. Our nation are in his debt for a new English which he taught them. "Euphues and his England" began first that language: all our ladyes were then his scollers; and that beautie in court, which could not parley Eupheueisme was as little regarded as shee which now there speakes not French.

[pg 20]

BLOUNT



[pg 21]

EUPHVES.  
THE ANATOMY  
of Wit.

Verie pleasant for all  
*Gentlemen to reade,*  
and most necessary to

remember.

*Wherein are contayned the  
delightes that wit followeth in  
his youth, by the pleasantnesse of loue,  
and the happinesse he reapeth  
in age, by the perfectnes  
of wisdom.*

*By Iohn Lylie, Maister of Art.*

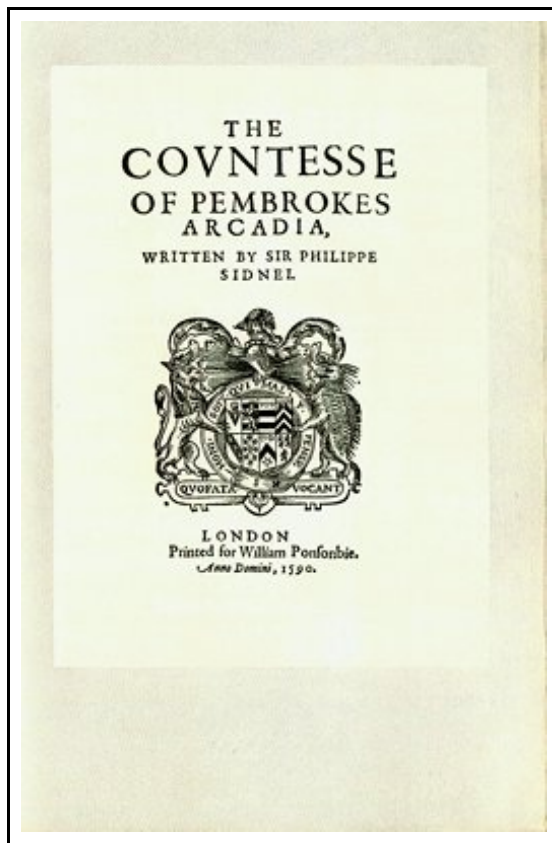
Corrected and augmented.

AT L O N D O N  
Printed for Gabriell Cawood,  
dwelling in Paules Church-yard.

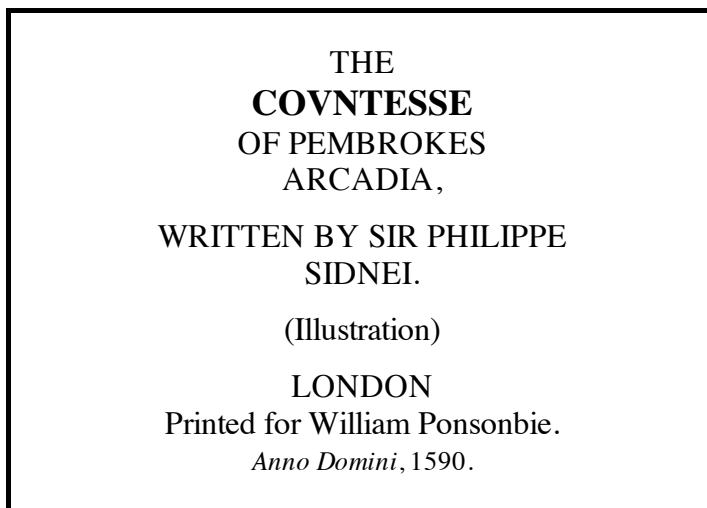
The noble and vertuous gentleman most worthy of all titles both of learning and  
chevalrie M. Philip Sidney.

[pg 2]

SPENSER



[pg 2]



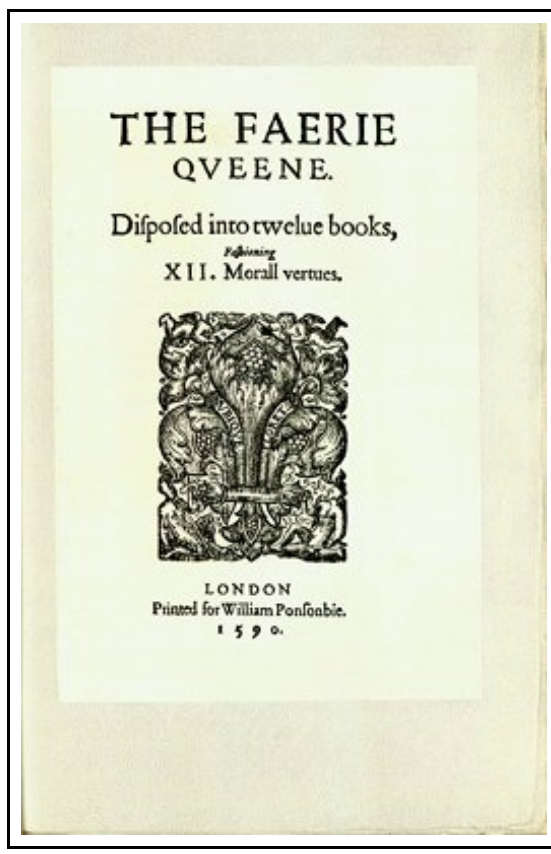

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Our sage and serious poet Spenser (whom I dare be known to think a better teacher than Scotus or Aquinas).

[pg 24]

MILTON

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[pg 24]



**THE FAERIE  
QVEENE.**

Disposed into twelue books,  
*Fashioning*  
XII. Morall vertues.

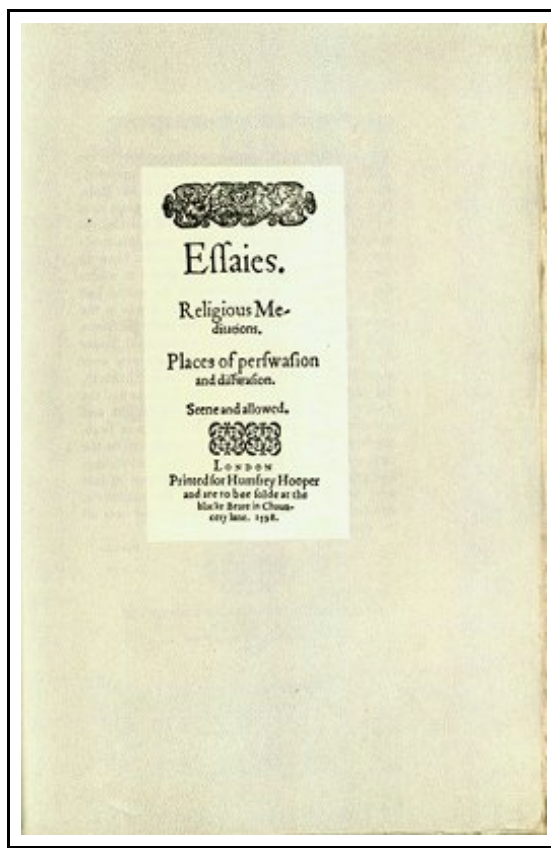
(Illustration)

LONDON  
Printed for William Ponsonbie.  
1 5 9 0.

Who is there that upon hearing the name of Lord Bacon does not instantly recognize everything of literature the most extensive, everything of discovery the most penetrating, everything of observation of human life the most distinguished and refined?

[pg 26]

BURKE



[pg 27]

Essaies.

Religious Meditations.

Places of perswasion  
and disswasion.

Seene and allowed.

(Illustration)

L O N D O N

Printed for Humfrey Hooper

and are to bee solde at the  
blacke Beare in Chauncery  
lane. 1598.

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They contain the heroic tales of the exploits of the great men in whom the new era was inaugurated; not mythic like the Iliads and the Eddas, but plain, broad narratives of substantial facts, which rival legend in interest and grandeur. What the old epics were to the royally or nobly born, this modern epic is to the common people. We have no longer kings or princes for chief actors to whom the heroism, like the dominion of the world, had in time past been confined. But, as it was in the days of the Apostles, when a few poor fishermen from an obscure lake in Palestine assumed, under the Divine Mission, the spiritual authority over mankind, so, in the days of our own Elizabeth, the seamen from the banks of the Thames and the Avon, the Plym and the Dart, self-taught and self-directed, with no impulse but what was beating in their own royal hearts, went out across the unknown seas, fighting, discovering, colonizing, and graved out the channels, paving them at last with their bones, through which the commerce and enterprise of England has flowed out over all the world.

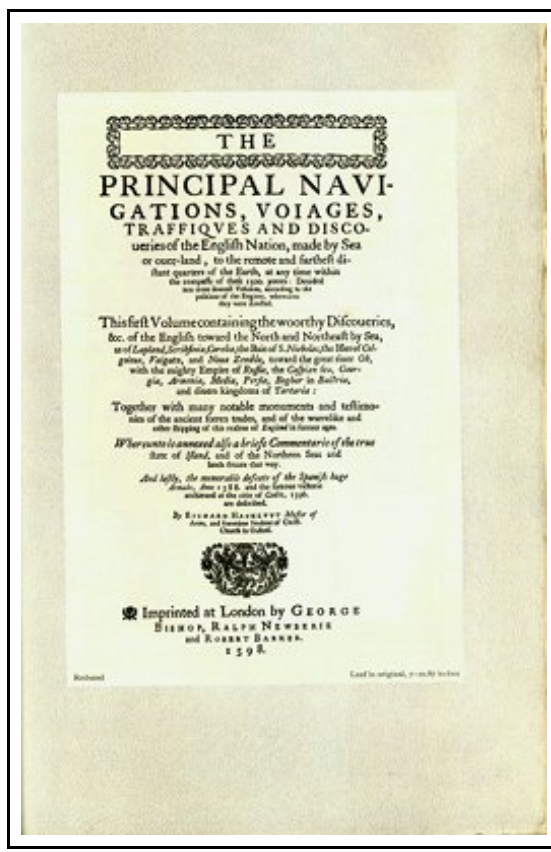
FROUDE

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[pg 28]

[pg 29]



THE  
PRINCIPAL NAVIGATIONS,  
VOIAGES,  
TRAFFIQUES AND DISCOUeries  
of the English Nation, made by Sea  
or ouer-land, to the remote and farthest distant  
quarters of the Earth, at any time within  
the compasse of these 1500. yeeres: Devided  
into three seuerall Volumes, according to the  
positions of the Regions, whereonto  
they were directed.

This first Volume containing the woorthy  
Discoveries,  
&c. of the English toward the North and Northeast  
by Sea,  
as of Lapland, Scricsinia, Corelia, the Baie of S. Nicholas,  
the Isles of Colgoieue,  
Vaigatz, and Noua Zembla, toward the great riuer Ob,  
with the mighty Empire of Russia, the Caspian sea, Georgia,  
Armenia, Media, Persia, Boghar in Bactria,  
and diuers kingdoms of Tartaria:

Together with many notable monuments and  
testimonies  
of the ancient forren trades, and of the warrelike and  
other shipping of this realme of England in former  
ages.

*Whereunto is annexed also a briefe Commentarie of  
the true  
state of Island, and of the Northren Seas and  
lands situate that way.*

*And lastly, the memorable defeate of the Spanish  
huge  
Armada, Anno 1588. and the famous victorie  
atchieued at the citie of Cadiz, 1596.  
are described.*

*By RICHARD HACKLVYT Master of  
Artes, and sometime Student of Christ-Church  
in Oxford.*

(Illustration)

Imprinted at London by GEORGE  
BISHOP, RALPH NEWBERIE  
and ROBERT BARKER.  
1 5 9 8.

Reduced

Leaf in original, 7 × 10.87 inches.

Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold

[pg 30]

And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;

Round many western islands have I been

Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.

Oft of one wide expanse had I been told

That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne;

Yet did I never breathe its pure serene

Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:

Then felt I like some watcher of the skies

When a new planet swims into his ken;

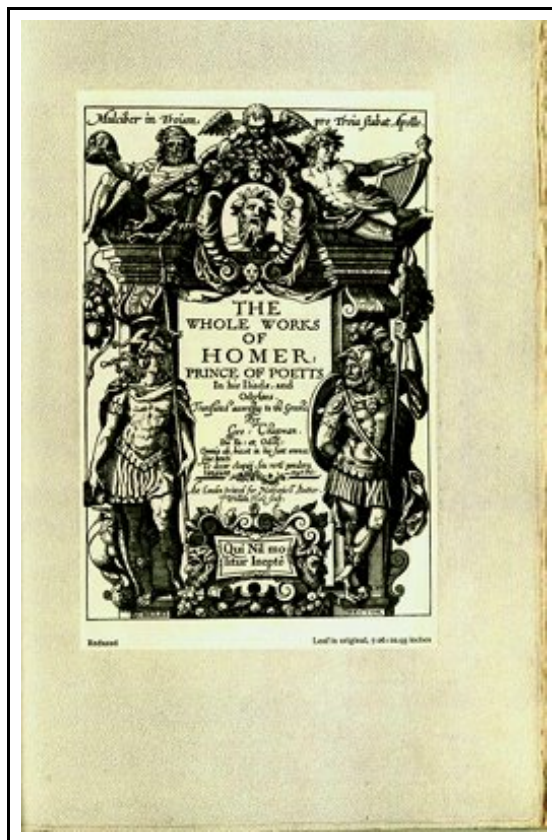
Or like stout Cortez, when with eagle eyes

He stared at the Pacific—and all his men

Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—

Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

KEATS



[pg 3]

*Mulciber in Troiam, pro Troia stabat Apollo.*

HOMER

THE  
WHOLE WORKS  
OF  
HOMER;  
PRINCE OF POETTS

In his Iliads, and  
Odysseys.

*Translated according to the Greeke,*

*By  
Geo: Chapman.*

De Ili: et Odiss:

*Omnia ab his: et in his sunt omnia:  
siue beati*

*Te decor eloquij, seu rerū pondera  
tangunt.*

*Angel Pol:*

*At London printed for Nathaniell Butter.*

*William Hole Sculp:*

Qui Nil molitur  
Ineptè

Reduced

Leaf in original, 7.06 x 10.93 inches.

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Within that awful volume lies  
The mystery of mysteries!  
Happiest they of human race,  
To whom God has granted grace  
To read, to fear, to hope, to pray,  
To lift the latch, and force the way;  
And better had they ne'er been born  
Who read to doubt, or read to scorn.

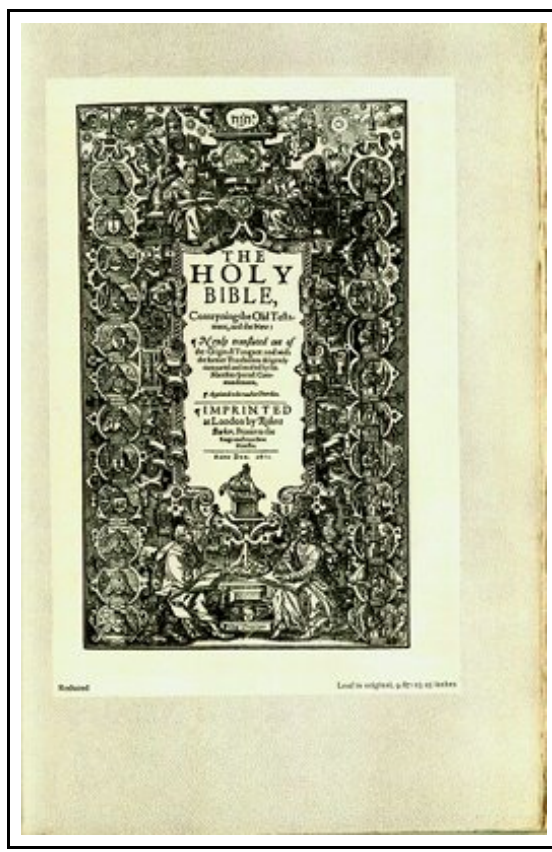
SCOTT

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[pg 31

[pg 31



THE  
HOLY  
BIBLE,

Conteyning the Old Testament,  
and the New:

¶ *Newly translated out of  
the Originall Tongues: and with  
the former Translations diligently  
compared and reuised by his  
Maiesties speciall Commandement,*

¶ *Appointed to be read in Churches.*

---

¶ IMPRINTED  
at London by *Robert  
Barker*, Printer to the  
Kings most excellent  
Maiestie.

---

ANNO DOM. 1611.

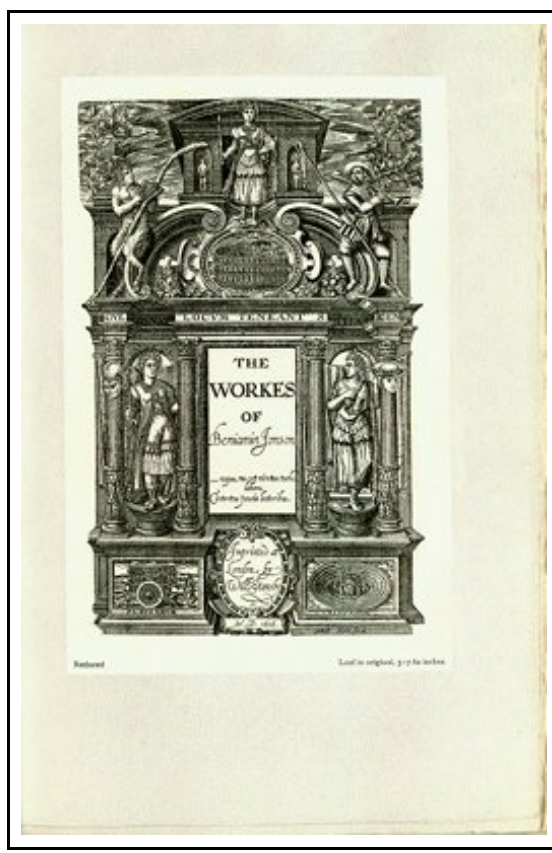
Reduced

Leaf in original 9.37 x 13.25 inches

O rare Ben Jonson

[pg 34

EPITAPH



[pg 34

THE  
WORKES  
of  
*Beniamin Jonson*

—*neque, me vt miretur turba  
laboro:  
Contentus paucis lectoribus.*

*Imprinted at  
London, by  
Will Stansby*

*An. D. 1616.*

Reduced

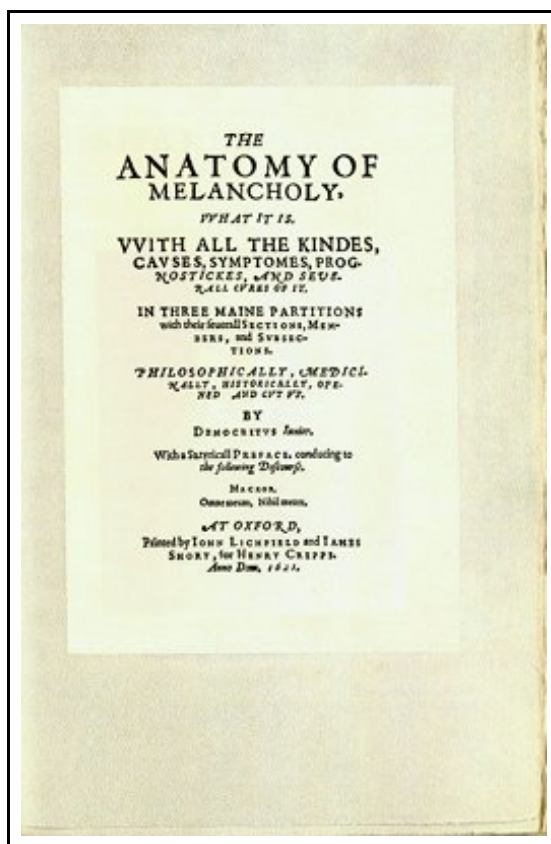
Leaf in original, 5 × 7.62 inches.



Scarce any book of philology in our land hath in so short a time passed so many impressions.

[pg 36]

FULLER



[pg 37]

THE  
ANATOMY OF  
MELANCHOLY,  
  
WHAT IT IS.  
  
WITH ALL THE KINDES,  
CAUSES, SYMPTOMES, PROGNOSTICKES,  
AND SEVERALL  
CVRES OF IT.  
  
IN THREE MAINE PARTITIONS  
with their seuerall SECTIONS, MEMBERS,  
and SUBSECTIONS.  
  
PHILOSOPHICALLY, MEDICINALLY,  
HISTORICALLY, OPENED

*AND CVT VP.*

BY

DEMOCRITVS *Iunior.*

With a Satyricall PREFACE, conducing to  
*the following Discourse.*

MACROB.

Omne meum, Nihil meum.

*AT OXFORD,*

Printed by IOHN LICHFIELD and IAMES

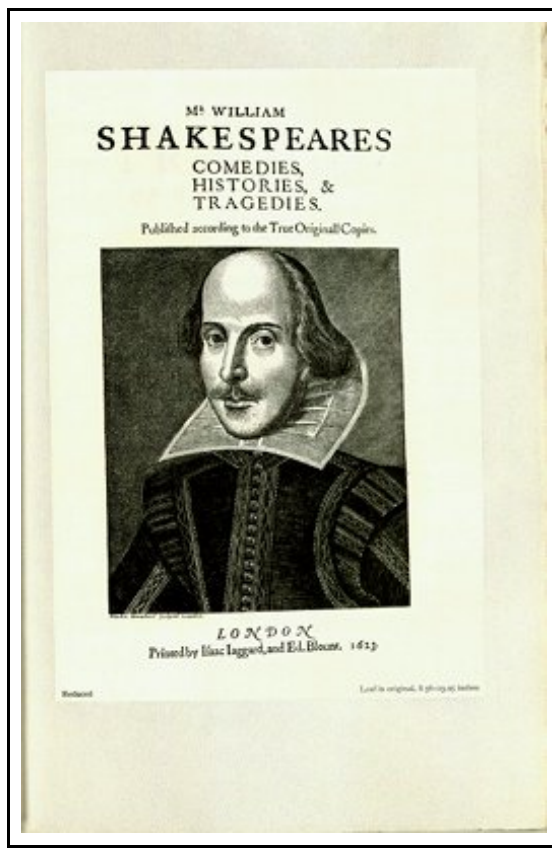
SHORT, for HENRY CRIPPS.

*Anno Dom. 1621.*

He was not of an age, but for all time!

[pg 38]

JONSON



[pg 39]

M<sup>R</sup>. WILLIAM  
SHAKESPEARES  
COMEDIES,  
HISTORIES, &  
TRAGEDIES.

Published according to the True Originall Copies.

(Illustration)

*Martin Droahout sculpsit London*

L O N D O N

Printed by Isaac Jaggard, and Ed. Blount. 1623.

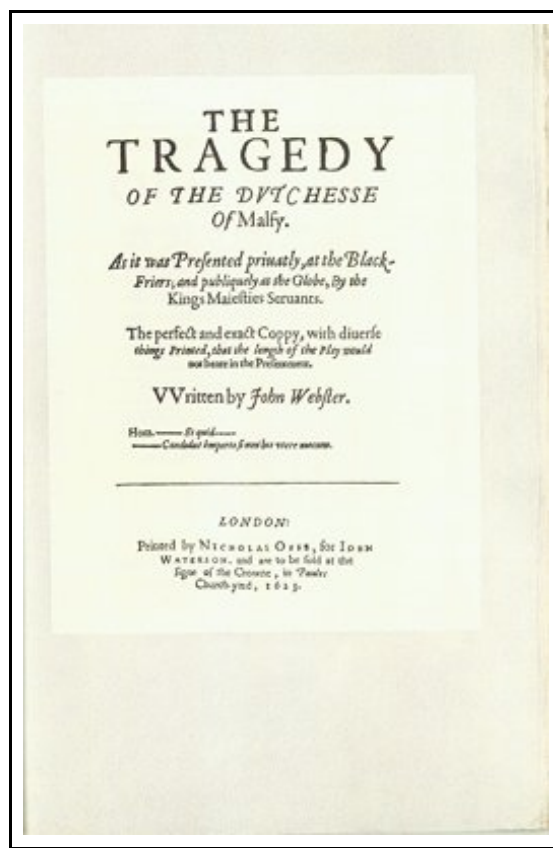
Reduced

Leaf in original 8.56 x 13.25 inches

This most tragic of all tragedies save King Lear.

[pg 40]

SWINBURNE



[pg 41]

THE  
T R A G E D Y  
OF THE DUTCHESS  
OF Malfy.

*As it was Presented priuatly, at the Black-Friers;  
and publiquely at the Globe, By the  
Kings Maiesties Seruants.*

The perfect and exact Coppy, with diuerse  
*things Printed, that the length of the Play would  
not beare in the Presentment.*

Written by *John Webster.*

Hora. — — *Si quid* — —  
— — *Candidus Imperti si non bis vtere mecum.*

---

LONDON:  
Printed by NICHOLAS OKES, for IOHN  
WATERSON, and are to be sold at the  
signe of the Crowne, in *Paules*  
Church-yard, 1 6 2 3.

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---

To me Massinger is one of the most interesting as well as one of the most delightful of the old dramatists, not so much for his passion or power, though at times he reaches both, as for the love he shows for those things that are lovely and of good report in human nature, for his sympathy with what is generous and high-minded and honorable and for his equable flow of a good every-day kind of poetry, with few rapids or cataracts, but singularly soothing and companionable.

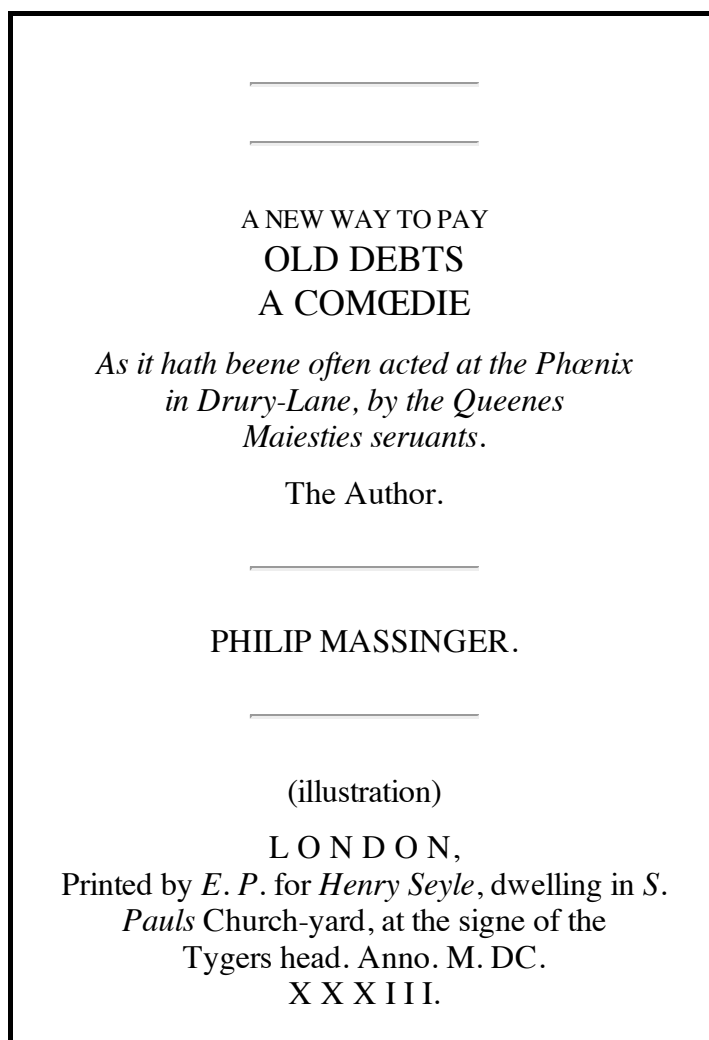
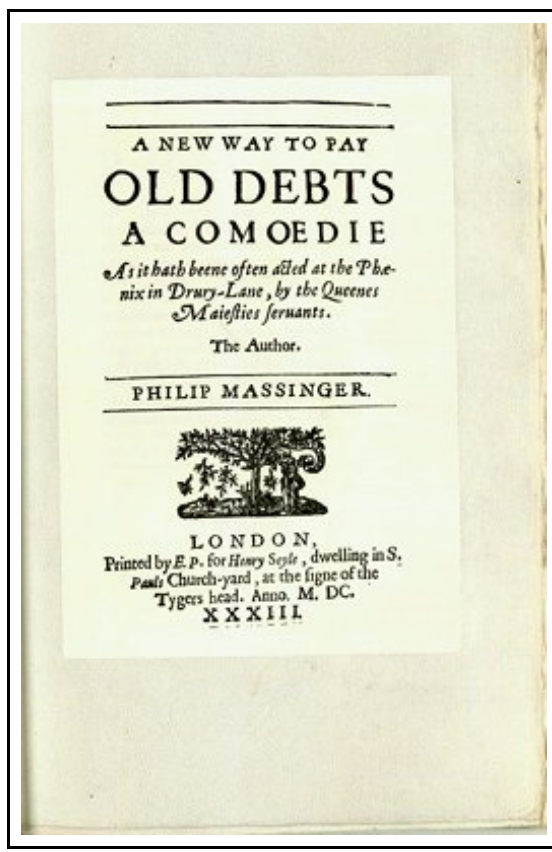
LOWELL

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[pg 4]

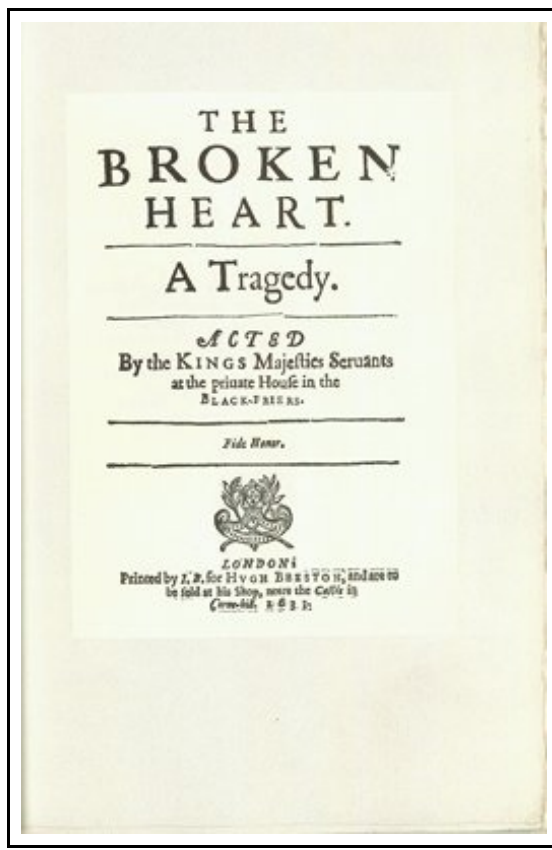
[pg 4]



Ford was of the first order of poets. He sought for sublimity, not by parcels in metaphors or visible images, but directly where she has her full residence in the heart of man; in the actions and sufferings of the greatest minds. There is a grandeur of the soul above mountains, seas, and the elements. Even in the poor perverted reason of Giovanni and Annabella we discover traces of that fiery particle, which in the irregular starting from out of the road of beaten action, discovers something of a right line even in obliquity, and shows hints of an improvable greatness in the lowest descents and degradation of our nature.

[pg 4<sup>c</sup>

LAMB

[pg 4<sup>c</sup>

THE  
BROKEN  
HEART.

A Tragedy.

*A C T E D*  
 By the **KINGS** Majesties Seruants  
 at the priuate House in the  
 BLACK-FRIERS.

---

*Fide Honor.*

---

(Illustration)

*LONDON:*  
 Printed by *I. B.* for **HVGH BEESTON**, and are to  
 be sold at his Shop, neere the *Castle* in  
*Corne-hill.* 1 6 3 3.

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Next Marlow, bathed in the Thespian springs,

[pg 40]

Had in him those brave sublunary things

That the first poets had; his raptures were

All air and fire which made his verses clear;

For that fine madness still he did retain,

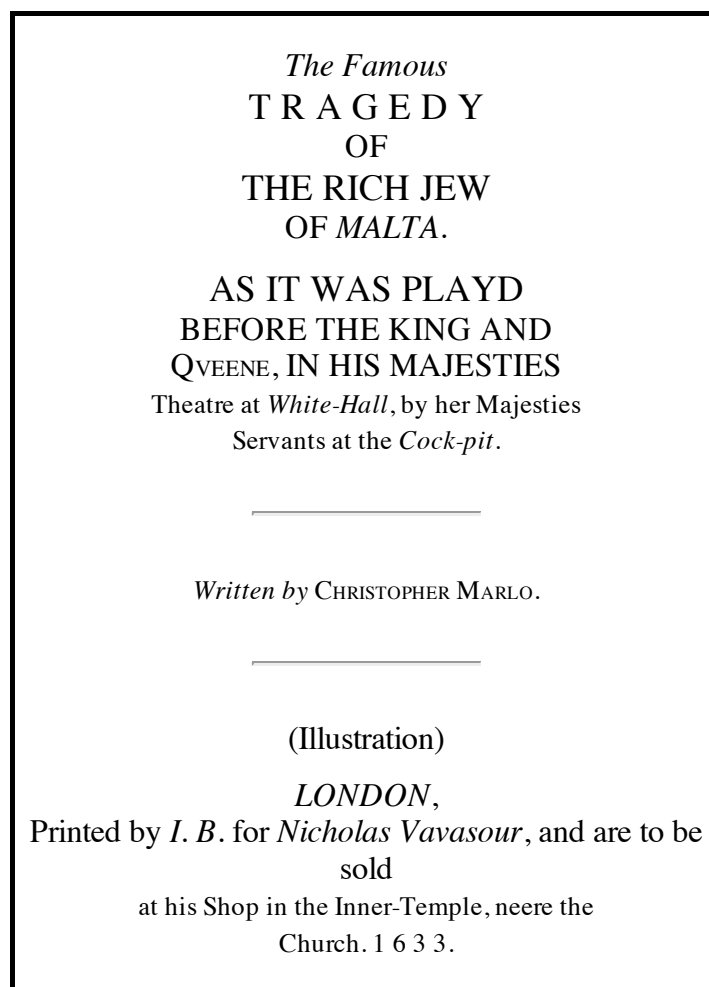
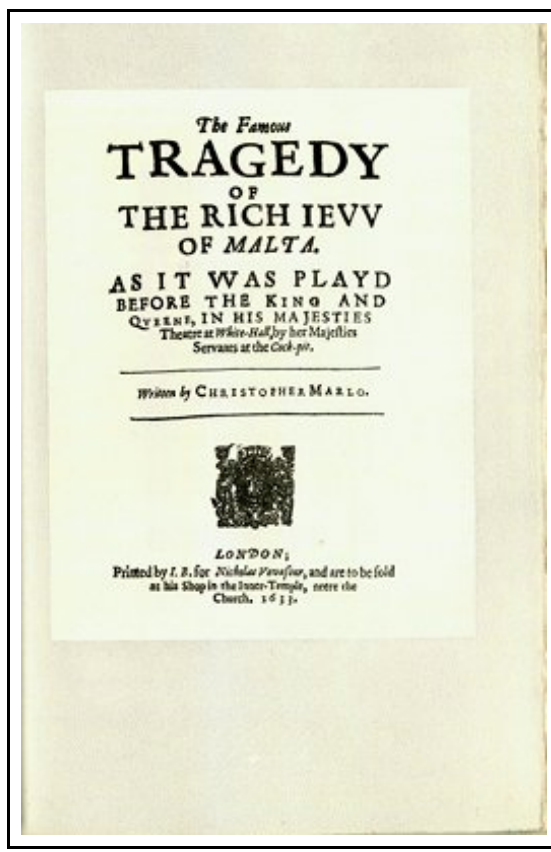
Which rightly should possess a poet's brain.

DRAYTON

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[pg 41]

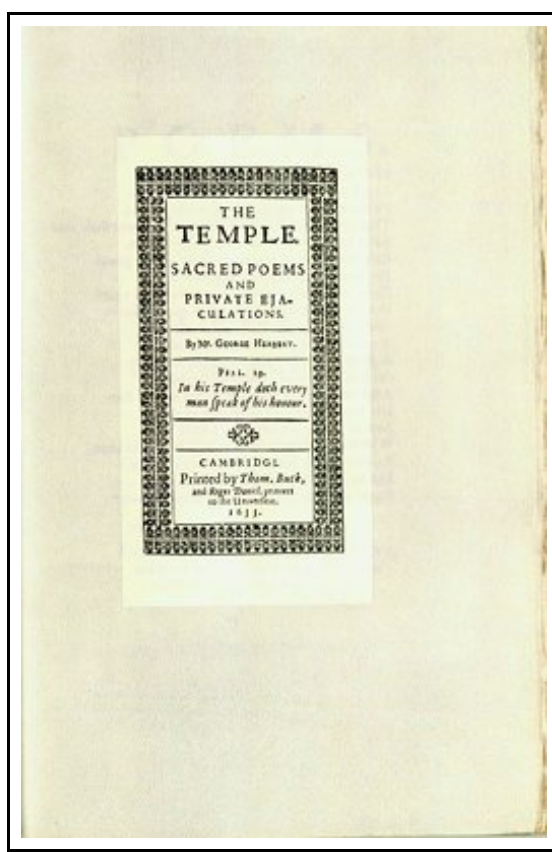




Sir, I pray deliver this little book to my dear brother Farrar, and tell him he shall find in it a picture of the many spiritual conflicts that have passed betwixt God and my soul, before I would subject mine to the will of Jesus, my Master, in Whose service I have now found perfect freedom. Desire him to read it; and then, if he can think it may turn to the advantage of any dejected poor soul, let it be made public; if not, let him burn it; for I and it are less than the least of God's mercies.

[pg 48]

HERBERT



[pg 49]

THE  
T E M P L E.  
SACRED POEMS  
AND  
PRIVATE EJACULATIONS.

By M<sup>r</sup>. GEORGE HERBERT.

PSAL. 29.

*In his Temple doth every  
man speak of his honour.*

---

(Illustration)

---

CAMBRIDGE  
Printed by *Thom. Buck*,  
and *Roger Daniel*, printers  
to the Universitie.  
1 6 3 3.

---

---

Did his youth scatter poetry wherein  
Lay Love's philosophy? Was every sin  
Pictured in his sharp satires, made so foul,  
That some have fear'd sin's shapes, and kept their soul  
Safer by reading verse: did he give days,  
Past marble monuments, to those whose praise  
He would perpetuate? Did he—I fear  
Envy will doubt—these at his twentieth year?  
But, more matured, did his rich soul conceive  
And in harmonious holy numbers weave  
A crown of sacred sonnets, fit to adorn  
A dying martyr's brow, or to be worn  
On that blest head of Mary Magdalen,  
After she wiped Christ's feet, but not till then;  
Did he—fit for such penitents as she  
And he to use—leave us a Litany

[pg 50]

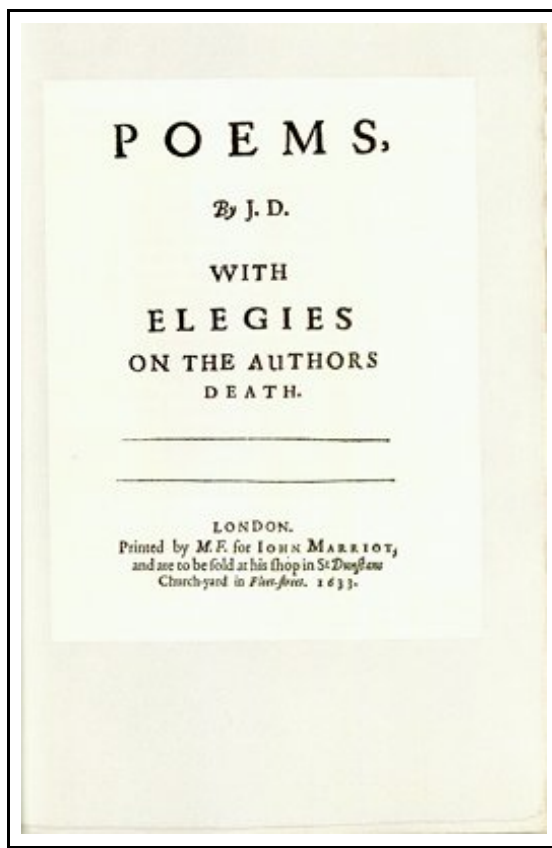
Which all devout men love, and doubtless shall,

As times grow better, grow more classical?

Did he write hymns, for piety and wit,

Equal to those great grave Prudentius writ?

WALTON



[pg 5]

**P O E M S,**  
*by J. D.*  
**WITH**  
**E L E G I E S**  
**ON THE AUTHORS**  
**DEATH.**

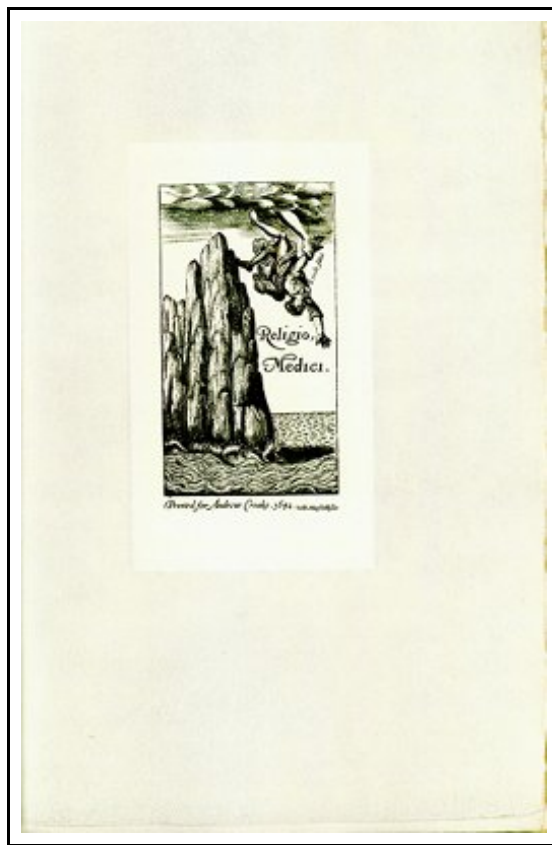
## LONDON.

Printed by *M. F.* for IOHN MARRIOT,  
and are to be sold at his shop in *S<sup>t</sup> Dunstons*  
Church-yard in *Fleet-street*. 1 6 3 3.

It is not on the praises of others, but on his own writings that he is to depend for the esteem of posterity; of which he will not easily be deprived while learning shall have any reverence among men; for there is no science in which he does not discover some skill; and scarce any kind of knowledge, profane or sacred, abstruse or elegant, which he does not appear to have cultivated with success.

[pg 5]

JOHNSON



[pg 5]

à coelo salus

Religio,  
Medici.

*Printed for Andrew Crooke. 1642. Will Marshall.*

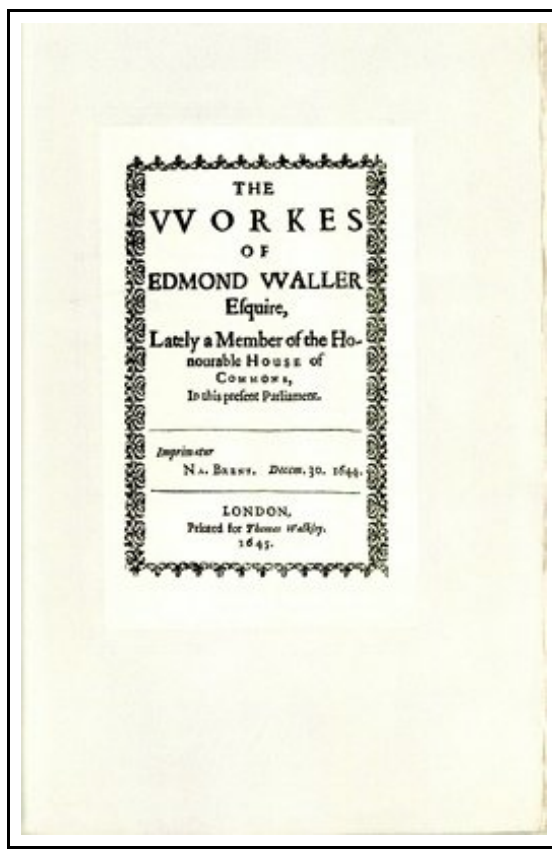
SCU.

Waller was smooth.

[pg 54

POPE

[pg 54



THE  
WORKES  
OF  
EDMOND WALLER  
Esquire,  
Lately a Member of the Honourable  
HOUSE of  
COMMONS,  
In this present Parliament.

*Imprimatur*  
NA. BRENT. *Decem. 30. 1644.*

---

LONDON,  
Printed for *Thomas Walkley.*  
1645.

---

---

O volume, worthy, leaf by leaf and cover,  
To be with juice of cedar washed all over!  
Here's words with lines, and lines with scenes consent  
To raise an act to full astonishment;  
Here melting numbers, words of power to move  
Young men to swoon, and maids to die for love:  
*Love lies a-bleeding* here; *Evadne* there  
Swells with brave rage, yet comely everywhere;  
Here's *A Mad Lover*; there that high design  
Of *King and No King*, and the rare plot thine.  
So that where'er we circumvolve our eyes,  
Such rich, such fresh, such sweet varieties  
Ravish our spirits, that entranc'd we see,  
None writes love's passion in the world like thee.

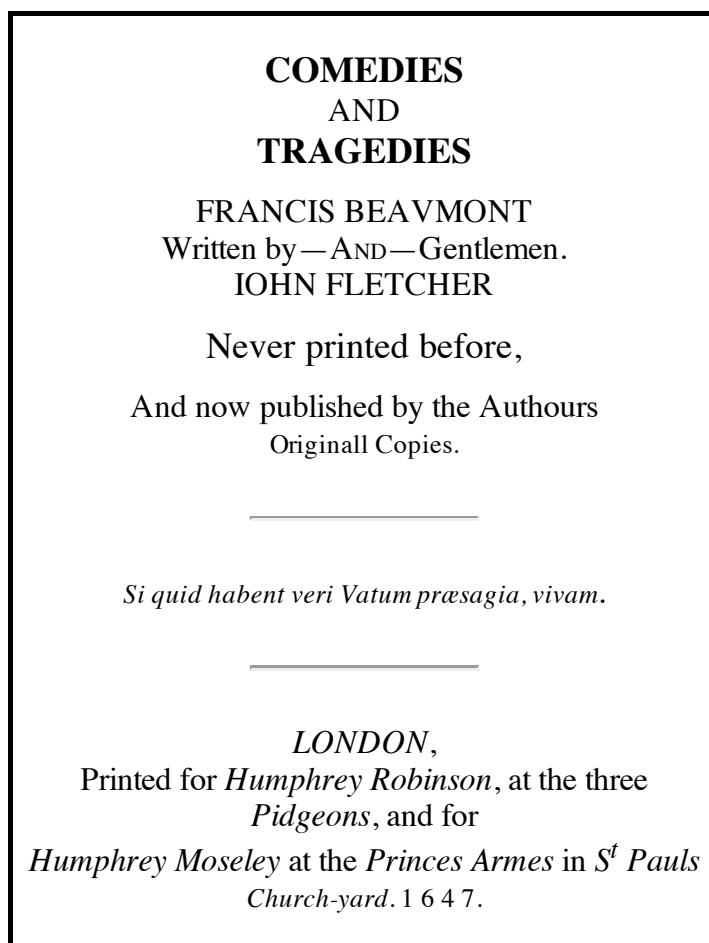
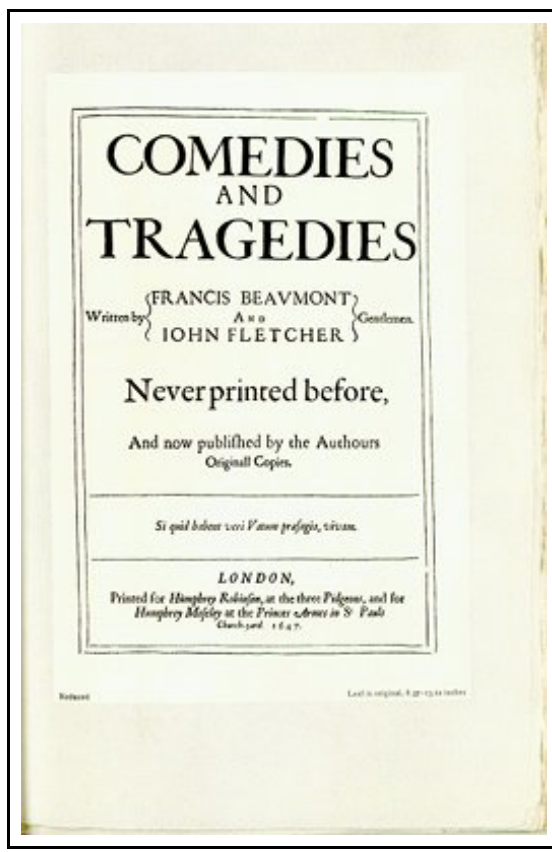
HERRICK

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[pg 50]

[pg 51]



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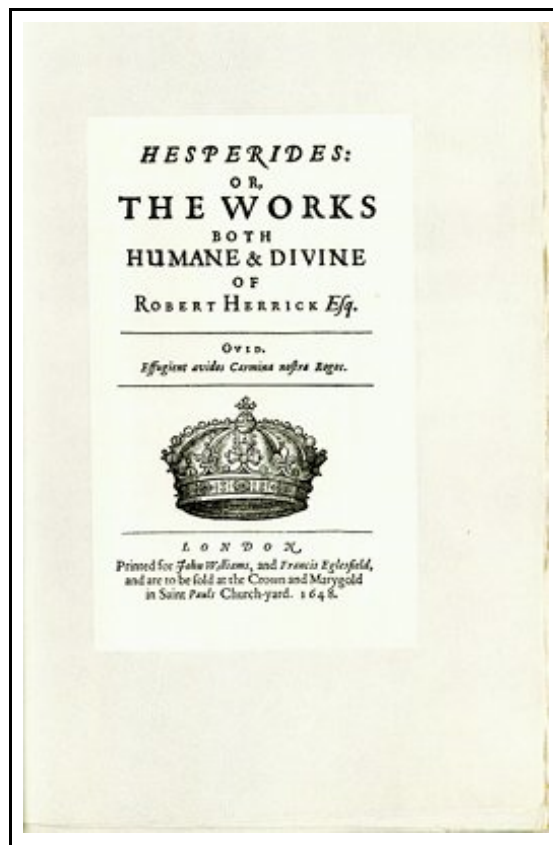
Leaf in original, 8.37 x 13.12 inches

What mighty epics have been wrecked by time

[pg 58]

Since Herrick launched his cockle-shell of rhyme!

ALDRICH



[pg 59]

*HESPERIDES:*  
OR,  
**THE WORKS**  
BOTH  
HUMANE & DIVINE  
OF  
ROBERT HERRICK *Esq.*

OVID.  
*Effugient avidos Carmina nostra Rogos.*



(Illustration)

*L O N D O N*

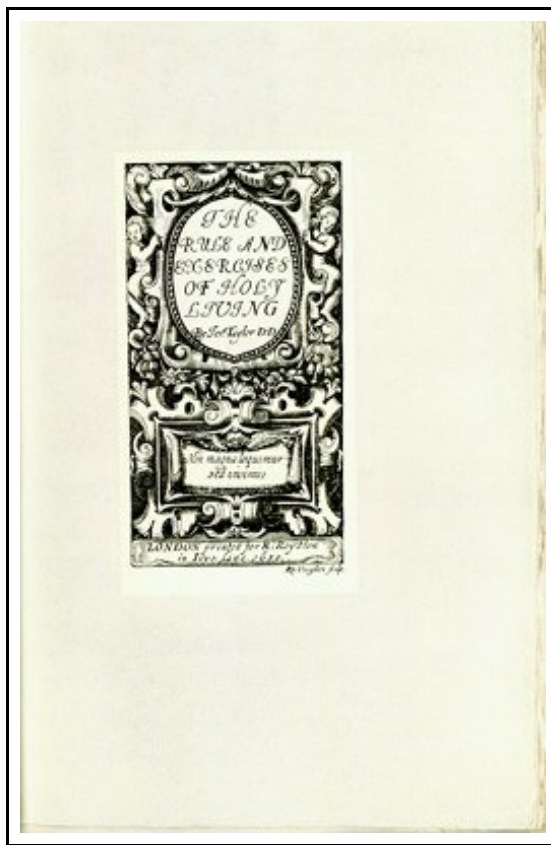
Printed for *John Williams*, and *Francis Eglesfield*,  
and are to be sold at the Crown and Marygold  
in Saint *Pauls* Church-yard. 1648.

Taylor, the Shakespeare of divines.

[pg 60]

EMERSON

[pg 61]



*THE  
RULE AND  
EXERCISES  
OF HOLY  
LIVING*

*By Jer. Taylor D:D.*

*Non magna loquimur  
sed vivimus*

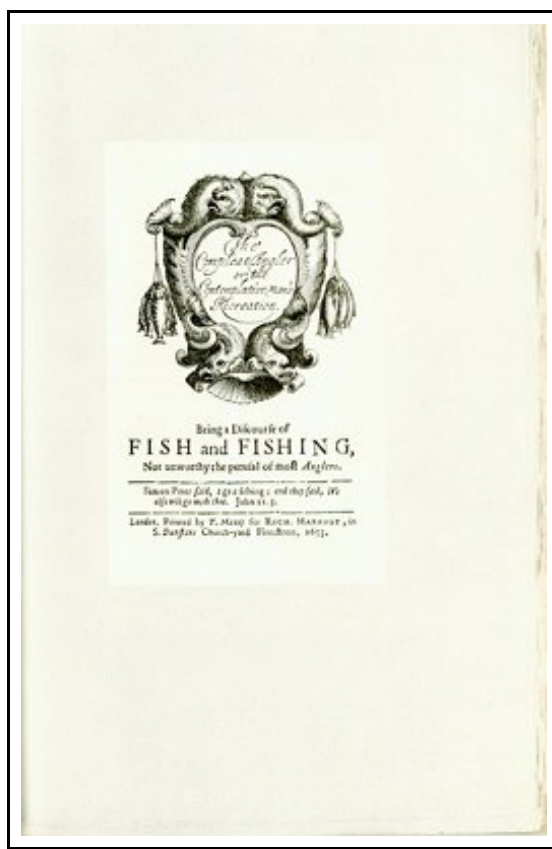
*LONDON printed for R. Royston  
in Ivye Lane. 1650.*

*Ro: Vaughan sculp.*

That is a book you should read: such sweet religion in it, next to Woolman's, though the subject be bait, and hooks, and worms, and fishes.

[pg 62]

LAMB



[pg 6:]

*The  
Compleat Angler  
or the  
Contemplative man's  
Recreation*

---

Being a Discourse of  
FISH and FISHING,  
Not unworthy the perusal of most *Anglers*.

---

Simon Peter said, *I go a fishing: and they said, We  
also wil go with thee.* John 21. 3.

---

*London, Printed by T. Maxey for RICH. MARRIOT, in  
S. Dunstons Church-yard Fleetstreet, 1653.*

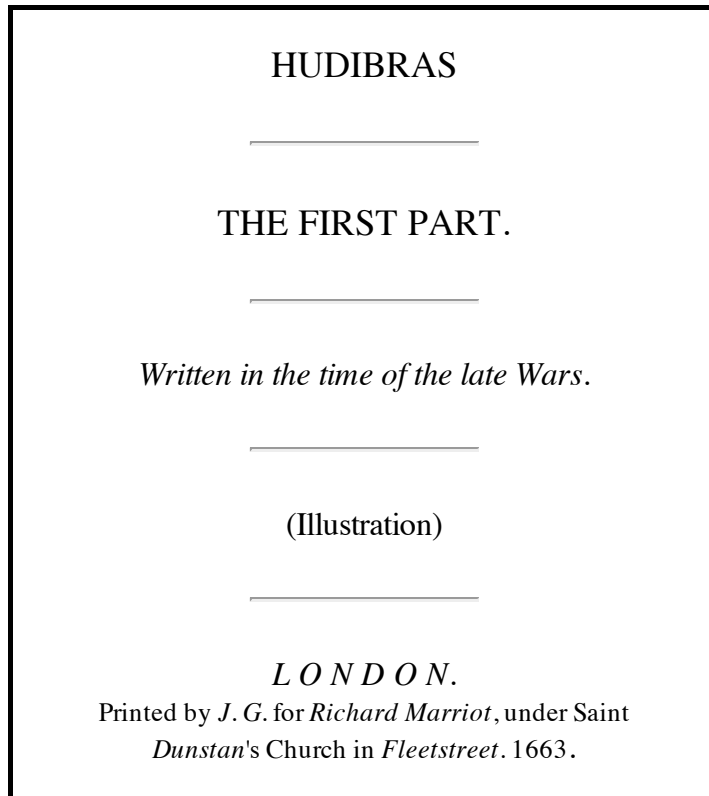
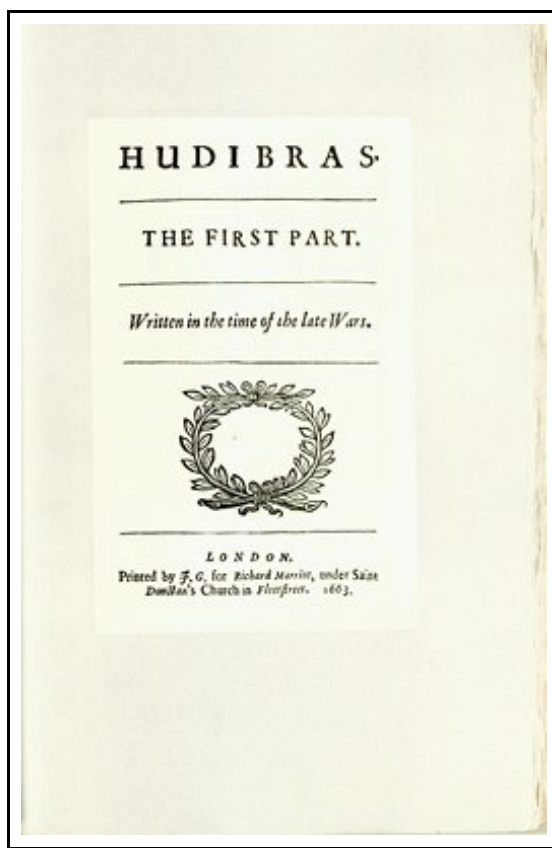
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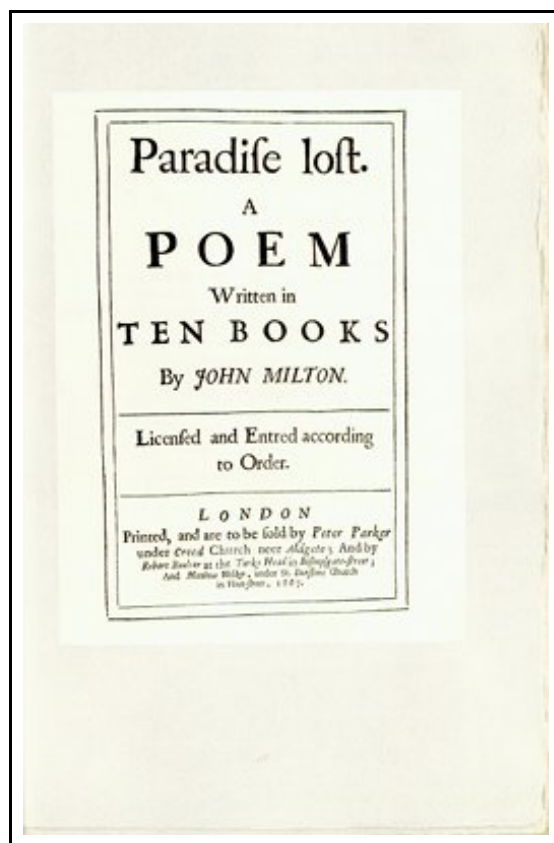
Yet he, consummate master, knew  
When to recede and when pursue.  
His noble negligences teach  
What others' toils despair to reach.  
He, perfect dancer, climbs the rope,  
And balances your fear and hope;  
If, after some distinguished leap,  
He drops his pole, and seems to slip,  
Straight gathering all his active strength,  
He rises higher half his length.  
With wonder you approve his slight,  
And owe your pleasure to your fright.

PRIOR

[pg 64



SHELLEY



[pg 60]

Paradise lost.  
A  
POEM  
Written in  
TEN BOOKS  
By *JOHN MILTON.*

Licensed and Entred according  
to Order.

*LONDON*  
Printed, and are to be sold by *Peter Parker*  
under *Creed Church* neer *Aldgate*; And by  
*Robert Boulter* at the *Turks Head* in *Bishopsgate-street*;  
And *Matthias Walker*, under *St. Dunstons Church*

in *Fleet-street*, 1667.

Ingenious dreamer! in whose well-told tale

[pg 68]

Sweet fiction and sweet truth alike prevail;

Whose humorous vein, strong sense, and simple style,

May teach the gayest, make the gravest smile;

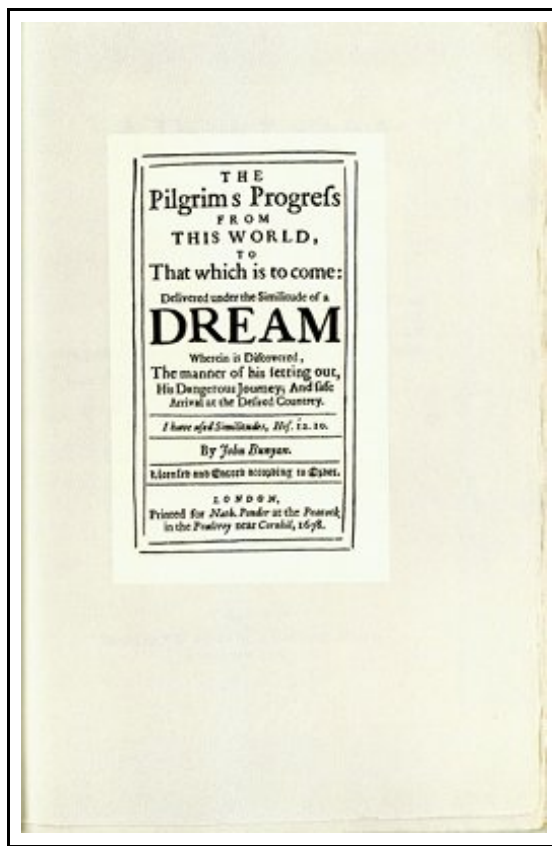
Witty and well-employed, and, like thy Lord,

Speaking in parables his slighted word:—

I name thee not, lest so despised a name

Should move a sneer at thy deserved fame.

COWPER



[pg 69]

THE  
Pilgrim's Progress  
FROM  
THIS WORLD,  
TO  
That which is to come:

Delivered under the Similitude of a  
**DREAM**

Wherein is Discovered,  
The manner of his setting out,  
His Dangerous Journey; And safe  
Arrival at the Desired Countrey.

---

*I have used Similitudes, Hos. 12. 10.*

---

By *John Bunyan*.

---

*Licensed and Entred according to Order.*

---

LONDON,  
Printed for *Nath. Ponder* at the *Peacock*  
in the *Poultrey* near *Cornhil*, 1678.

---

---

Behold where Dryden's less presumptuous car

[pg 70]

Wide o'er the fields of glory bear

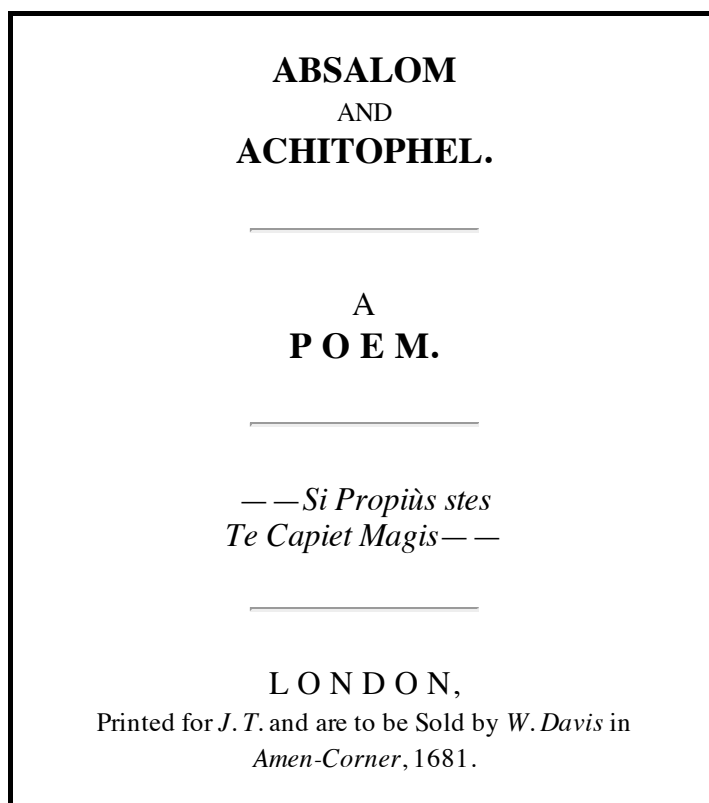
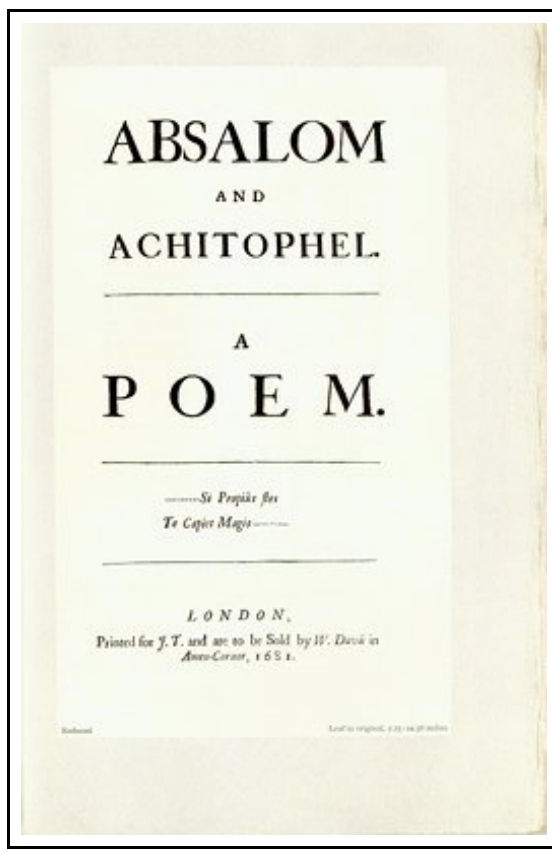
Two coursers of ethereal race,

With necks in thunder clothed, and long-resounding pace.

GRAY

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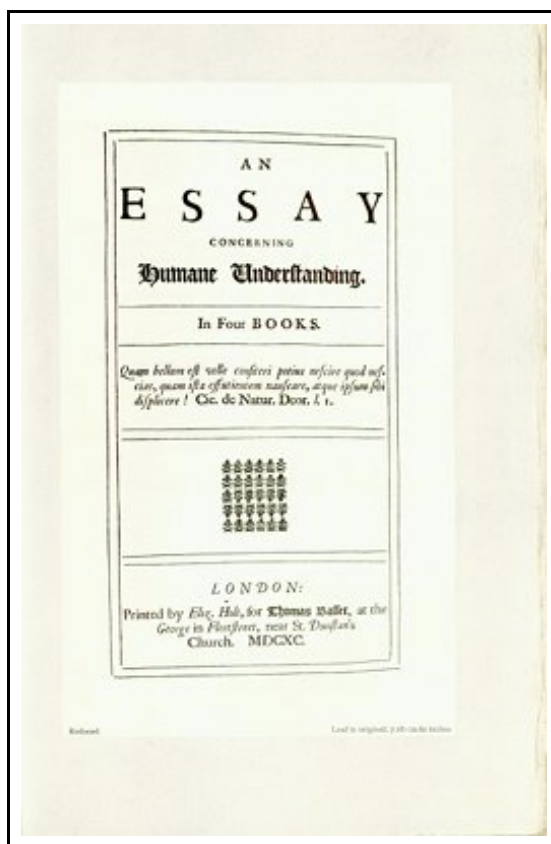
Leaf in original, 7.75 × 12.56 inches.



Few books in the literature of philosophy have so widely represented the spirit of the age and country in which they appeared, or have so influenced opinion afterwards as Locke's *Essay concerning Human Understanding*. The art of education, political thought, theology and philosophy, especially in Britain, France and America, long bore the stamp of the *Essay*, or of reaction against it.

[pg 71]

FRASER



[pg 71]

AN  
**ESSAY**  
 CONCERNING  
*Humane Understanding.*

—  
 In Four B O O K S.  
 —

*Quam bellum est velle confiteri potius  
 nescire quod nescias, quam ista  
 effutientem nauseare, atque ipsum sibi  
 displicere! Cic. de Natur. Deor. l. 1.*

(illustration)

*L O N D O N:*

Printed by *Eliz. Holt*, for *Thomas Basset*, at the  
*George* in *Fleetstreet*, near *St. Dunstan's*  
 Church. MDCXC.

Reduced

Leaf in original, 7.18 × 12.62 inches

Oh! that your brows my laurel had sustained,  
 Well had I been deposed if you had reigned!  
 The father had descended for the son;  
 For only you are lineal to the throne.

[pg 74

Yet I this prophesy: thou shalt be seen,  
 (Though with some short parenthesis between,)  
 High on the throne of wit; and, seated there,  
 Not mine (that's little) but thy laurel wear.  
 Thy first attempt an early promise made,  
 That early promise this has more than paid;  
 So bold, yet so judiciously you dare,  
 That your least praise is to be regular.

Already I am worn with cares and age,  
 And just abandoning the ungrateful stage;

Unprofitably kept at heaven's expense,

I live a rent-charge on his providence.

But you, whom every Muse and Grace adorn,

Whom I foresee to better fortune born,

Be kind to my remains; and, oh defend,

Against your judgment, your departed friend!

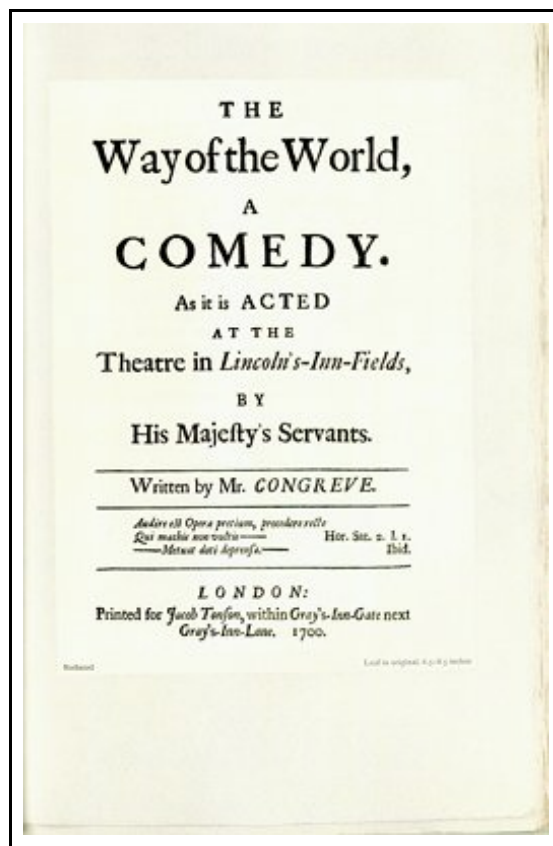
Let not the insulting foe my fame pursue,

But shield those laurels which descend to you:

And take for tribute what these lines express:

You merit more, but could my love do less.

DRYDEN



[pg 7:]

THE

**Way of the World,**

A

**COMEDY.**

As it is ACTED

AT THE

Theatre in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*,

BY

His Majesty's Servants.

---

 Written by Mr. *CONGREVE*.
 

---

*Audire est Operæ pretium, procedere recte*  
*Qui mæchis non vultis* — — Hor. Sat. 2. 1. 1.  
 — — *Metuat doti deprensa.* — — Ibid.

---

*L O N D O N:*

Printed for *Jacob Tonson*, within *Gray's-Inn-Gate*  
 next  
*Gray's-Inn-Lane*. 1700.

Reduced

Leaf in original, 6.5 × 8.5 inches.

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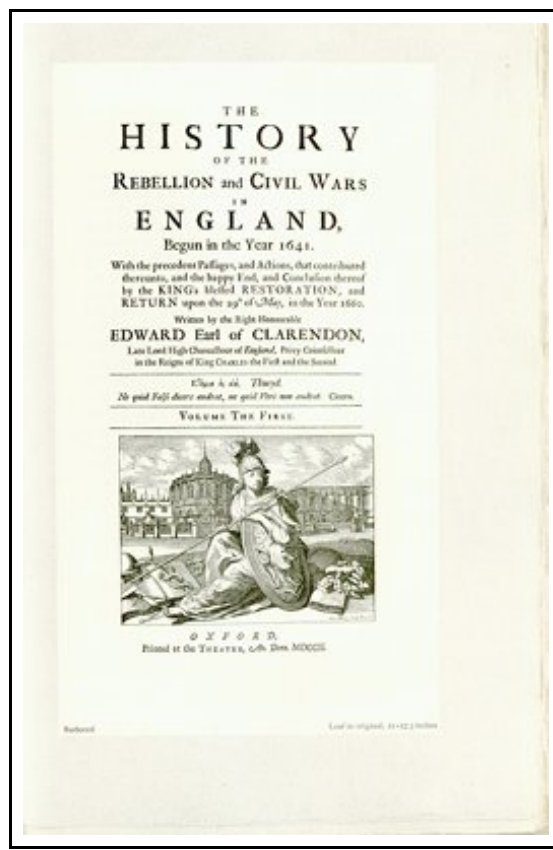
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For an Englishman there is no single historical work with which it can be so necessary for him to be well and thoroughly acquainted as with Clarendon.

[pg 76]

SOUTHEY

[pg 77]



THE  
HISTORY  
OF THE  
REBELLION and CIVIL WARS  
IN  
ENGLAND,  
Begun in the Year 1641.

With the precedent Passages, and  
Actions, that contributed thereunto, and  
the happy End, and Conclusion thereof  
by the KING's blessed  
RESTORATION, and RETURN upon  
the 29<sup>th</sup> of May, in the Year 1660.

Written by the Right Honourable  
EDWARD Earl of CLARENDON,  
Late Lord High Chancellour of *England*, Privy Counsellour  
in the Reigns of King CHARLES the First and the Second.

κτῆμα ἐς ἀεί Thucyd.  
*Ne quid Falsi dicere audeat, ne quid Veri non  
audeat. Cicero.*

## VOLUME THE FIRST.

(Illustration)

*O X F O R D*,  
Printed at the THEATER, *An. Dom.* MDCCII.

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Leaf in original, 11 × 17.5 inches.

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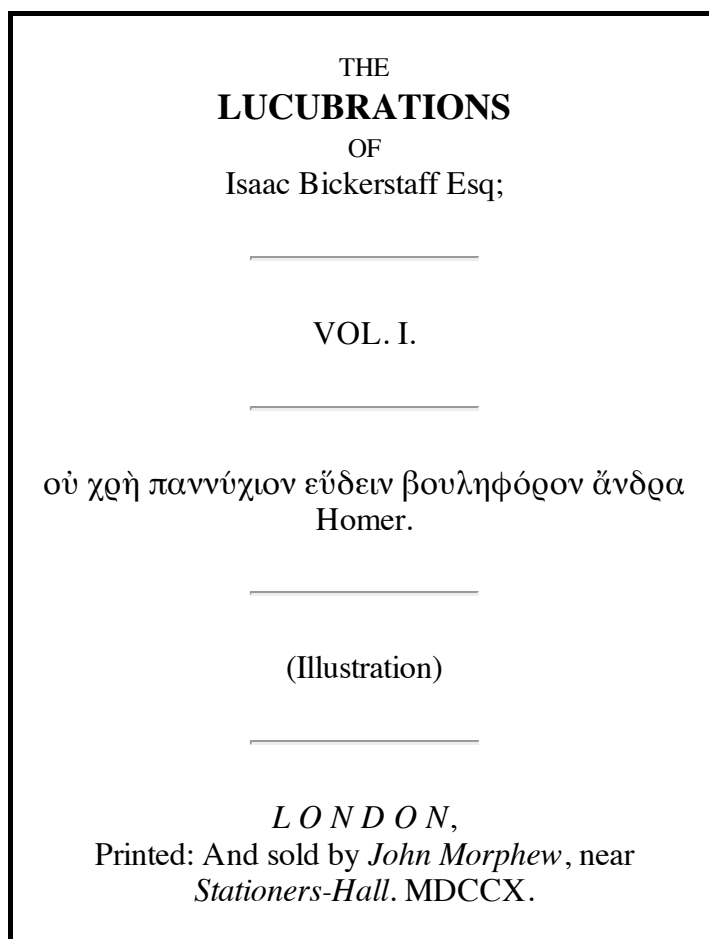
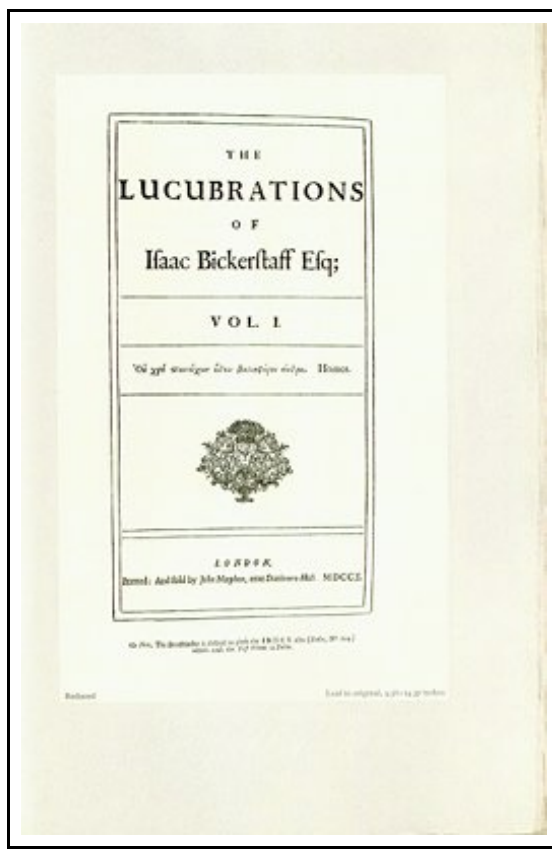
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It is incredible to conceive the effect his writings have had upon the Town; how many thousand follies they have either quite banished or given a very great check to! how much countenance they have added to Virtue and Religion! how many people they have rendered happy, by showing them it was their own fault if they were not so! and lastly how entirely they have convinced our young fops and young fellows of the value and advantages of Learning! He has indeed rescued it out of the hands of pedants, and fools, and discovered the true method of making it amiable and lovely to all mankind. In the dress he gives it, it is a most welcome guest at tea-tables and assemblies, and is relished and caressed by the merchants on the Change. Accordingly, there is not a Lady at Court, nor a Broker in Lombard Street, who is not easily persuaded that Captain *Steele* is the greatest Scholar and Casuist of any man in England.

GAY

[pg 78]

[pg 79]



*Note, The Bookbinder is desired to place the INDEX after [Tosler, N<sup>o</sup>. 114]  
which ends the First Volume in Folio.*

Reduced

Leaf in original, 9.50 × 14.37 inches

Whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison.

[pg 80]

JOHNSON

[pg 81]



NUMB. 1

The SPECTATOR.

*Non fumum ex fulgore, sed ex fumo dare lucem  
Cogitat; ut speciosa dehinc miracula promat. Hor.*

To be Continued every Day.



*Thursday, March 1. 1711.*

I Have observed, that a Reader seldom peruses a Book with Pleasure 'till he knows whether the Writer of it be a black or a fair Man, of a mild or cholerick Disposition, Married or a Batchelor, with other Particulars of the like nature, that conduce very much to the right Understanding of an Author. To gratify this Curiosity, which is so natural to a Reader, I design this Paper, and my next, as Prefatory Discourses to my following Writings, and shall give some Account in them of the several Persons that are engaged in this Work. As the chief Trouble of Compiling, Digesting and Correcting will fall to my Share, I must do my self the Justice to open the Work with my own History.

I was born to a small Hereditary Estate, which I find, by the Writings of the Family, was bounded by the same Hedges and Ditches in *William* the Conqueror's Time that it is at present, and has been delivered down from Father to Son whole and entire, without the Loss or Acquisition of a single Field or Meadow, during the Space of six hundred Years. There goes a Story in the Family, that when my Mother was gone with Child of me about three Months, she dreamt that she was brought to Bed of a Judge: Whether this might proceed from a Law-Suit which was then depending in the Family, or my Father's being a Justice of the Peace, I cannot determine; for I am not so vain as to think it presaged any Dignity that I should arrive at in my future Life, though that was the Interpretation which the Neighbourhood put upon it. The Gravity of my Behaviour at my very first Appearance in the World, and all the Time that I sucked, seemed to favour my Mother's Dream: For, as she has often told me, I threw away my Rattle before I was two Months old, and would not make use of my Coral 'till they had taken away the Bells from it.

As for the rest of my Infancy, there being nothing in it remarkable, I shall pass it over in Silence. I find that, during my Nonage, I had the Reputation of a very sullen Youth, but was always a Favourite of my School-Master, who used to say, *that my Parts were solid and would wear well*. I had not been long at the University, before I distinguished my self by a most profound Silence: For, during the Space of eight Years, excepting in the publick Exercises of the College, I scarce uttered the Quantity of an hundred Words; and indeed do not remember that I ever spoke three Sentences together in my whole Life.

Whilst I was in this Learned Body I applied my self with so much Diligence to my Studies, that there are very few celebrated Books, either in the Learned or the Modern Tongues, which I am not acquainted with.

Upon the Death of my Father I was resolved to travel into Foreign Countries, and therefore left the University, with the Character of an odd unaccountable Fellow, that had a great deal of Learning, if I would but show it. An insatiable Thirst after Knowledge carried me into all the Countries of *Europe*, where there was any thing new or strange to be seen; nay, to such a Degree was my Curiosity raised, that having read the Controversies of some great Men concerning the Antiquities of *Egypt*, I made a Voyage to *Grand Cairo*, on purpose to take the Measure of a Pyramid; and as soon as I had set my self right in that Particular, returned to my Native Country with great Satisfaction.

I have passed my latter Years in this City, where I am frequently seen in most publick Places, tho' there are not above half a dozen of my select Friends that know me; of whom my next Paper shall give a more particular Account. There is no Place of publick Resort, wherein I do not often make my Appearance; sometimes I am seen thrusting my Head into a Round of Politicians at *Will's*, and listning with great Attention to the Narratives that are made in those little Circular Audiences. Sometimes I smoak a Pipe at *Child's*; and whilst I seem attentive to nothing but the *Post-Man*, over-hear the Conversation of every Table in the Room. I appear on *Sunday Nights* at *St. James's Coffee-House*, and sometimes join the little Committee of Politicks in the Inner-Room, as one who comes there to hear and improve. My Face is likewise very well known at the *Grecian*, the *Cocoa-Tree*, and in the Theaters both of *Drury-Lane*, and the *Hay-Market*. I have been taken for a Merchant

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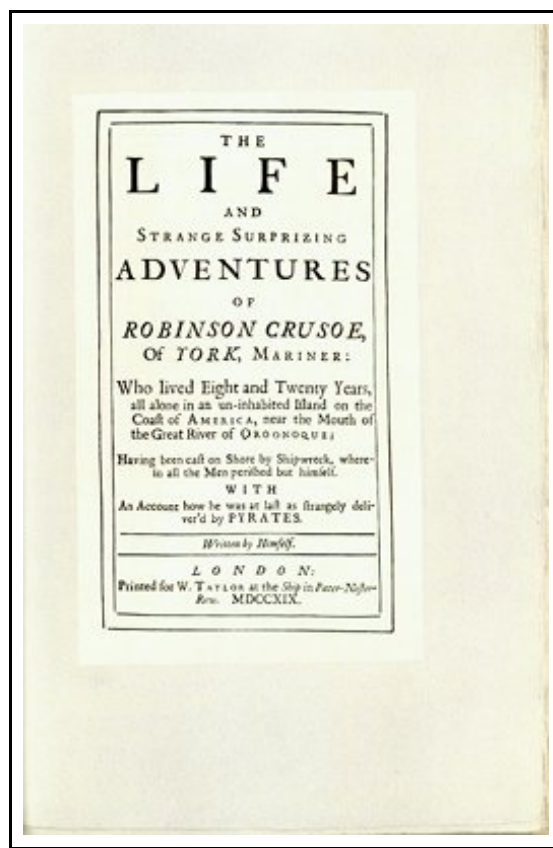
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It breathes throughout a spirit of piety and benevolence; it sets in a very striking light the importance of the mechanic arts, which they who know not what it is to be without them are apt to undervalue. It fixes in the mind a lively idea of the horrors of solitude, and, consequently, of the sweets of social life, and of the blessings we derive from conversation and mutual aid; and it shows how by labouring with one's own hands, one may secure independence, and open for one's self many sources of

[pg 8]

health and amusement. I agree, therefore, with Rousseau, that this is one of the best books that can be put into the hands of children.

BEATTIE



[pg 8]

THE  
LIFE  
AND  
STRANGE SURPRIZING  
ADVENTURES  
OF  
ROBINSON CRUSOE,  
Of YORK, MARINER:

Who lived Eight and Twenty Years,  
all alone in an un-inhabited Island on the  
Coast of AMERICA, near the Mouth of  
the Great River of OROONOQUE;

Having been cast on Shore by Shipwreck, wherein  
all the Men perished but himself.

WITH  
An Account how he was at last as strangely deliver'd

by PYRATES.

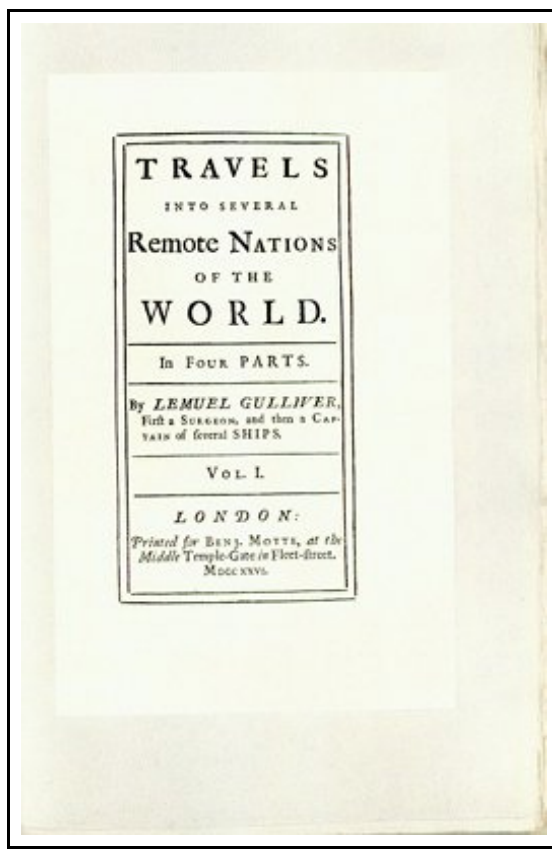
*Written by Himself.*

LONDON:  
Printed for W. TAYLOR at the *Ship* in *Pater-Noster-*  
*Row.*  
MDCCXIX.

Anima Rabelasii habitans in sicco

[pg 84

COLERIDGE



[pg 84

TRAVELS

INTO SEVERAL  
Remote NATIONS  
OF THE  
WORLD.

---

In FOUR PARTS.

---

By *LEMUEL GULLIVER*,  
First a SURGEON, and then a CAPTAIN  
of several SHIPS.

---

VOL. I.

---

*L O N D O N:*  
*Printed for BENJ. MOTTE, at the*  
*Middle Temple-Gate in Fleet-street.*  
MDCCXXVI.

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I think no English poet ever brought so much sense into the same number of lines with equal smoothness, ease, and poetical beauty. Let him who doubts of this peruse the *Essay on Man* with attention.

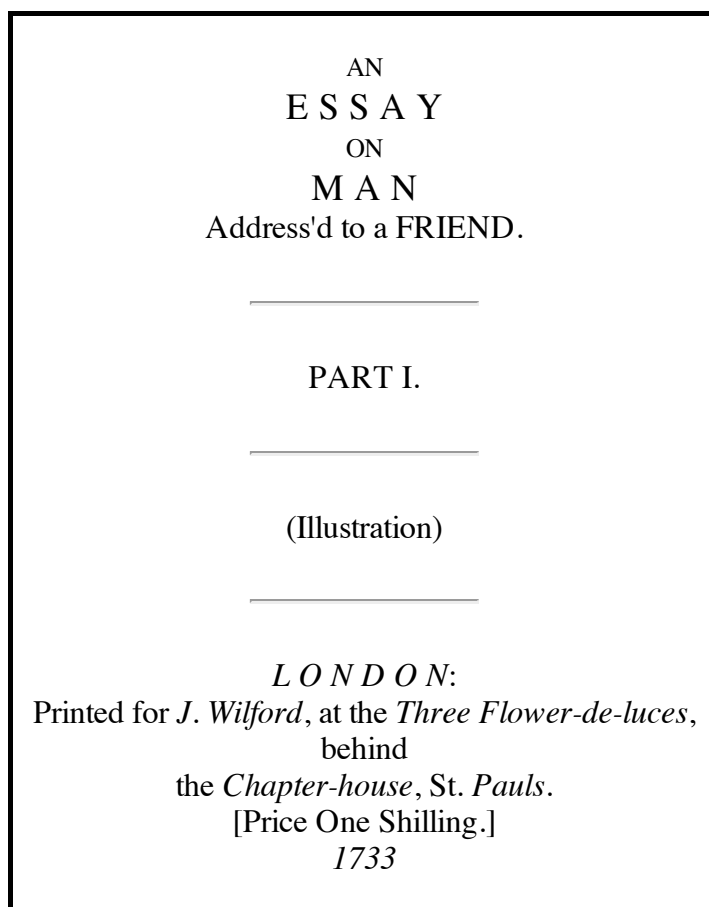
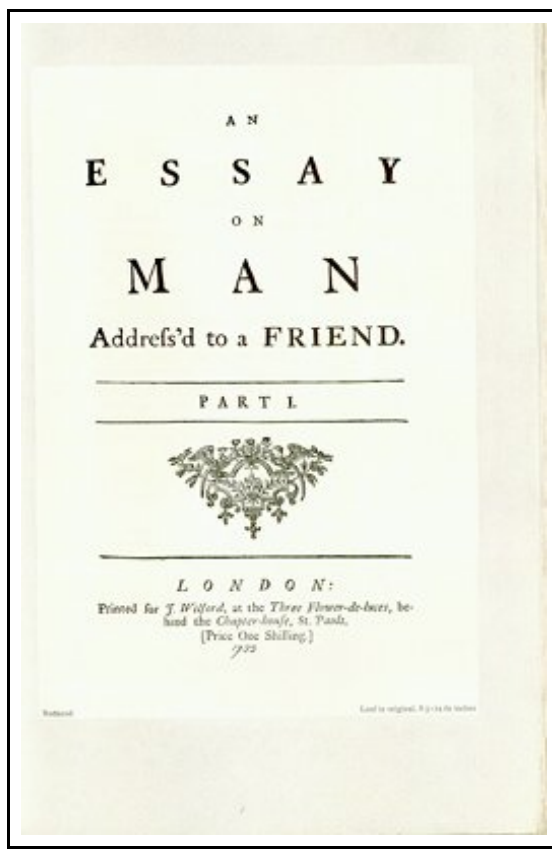
[pg 80]

SHENSTONE

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[pg 81]



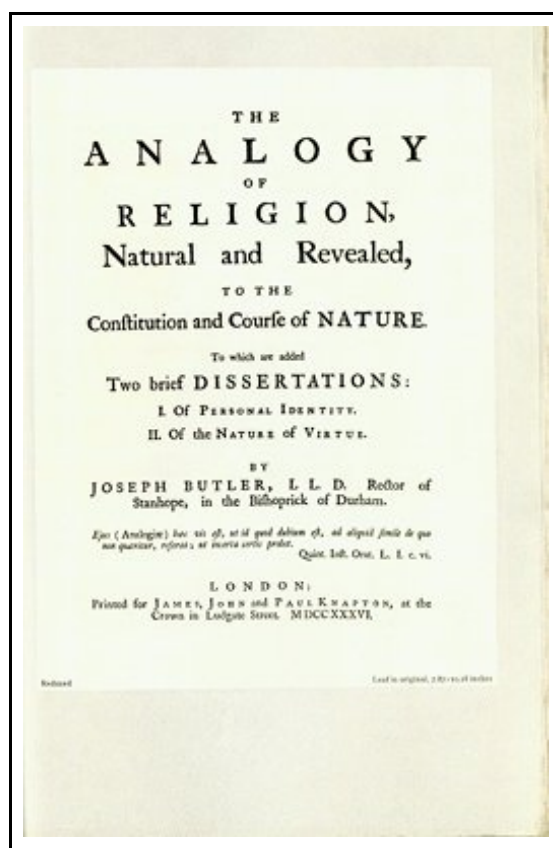
Reduced

Leaf in original, 8.5 × 12.62 inches.

It was about this date, I suppose, that I read Bishop Butler's *Analogy*; the study of which has been to so many, as it was to me, an era in their religious opinions. Its inculcation of a visible church, the oracle of truth and a pattern of sanctity, of the duties of external religion, and of the historical character of Revelation, are characteristics of this great work which strike the reader at once; for myself, if I may attempt to determine what I most gained from it, it lay in two points which I shall have an opportunity of dwelling on in the sequel: they are the underlying principles of a great portion of my teaching.

[pg 88]

NEWMAN



[pg 89]

THE  
ANALOGY  
OF  
RELIGION,  
Natural and Revealed,  
TO THE  
Constitution and Course of NATURE.

To which are added  
Two brief DISSERTATIONS:  
I. Of PERSONAL IDENTITY.  
II. Of the NATURE of VIRTUE.

BY  
JOSEPH BUTLER, L. L. D. Rector of  
Stanhope, in the Bishoprick of Durham.

*Ejus (Analogiæ) hæc vis est, ut id quod dubium est,  
ad aliquid simile de quo  
non quæritur, referat; ut incerta certis probet.*  
Quint. Inst. Orat. L. I. c. vi.

L O N D O N:  
Printed for JAMES, JOHN and PAUL KNAPTON, at the  
Crown in Ludgate Street. MDCCXXXVI.

Reduced

Leaf in original, 7.87 × 10.18 inches.

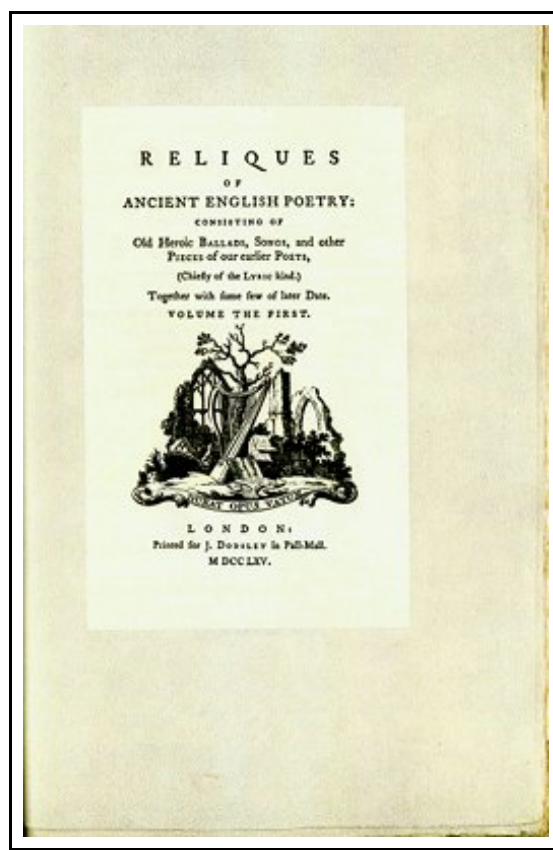
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I never heard the olde song of Percy and Duglas that I found not my heart mooved  
more than with a Trumpet.

[pg 90]

SIDNEY

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[pg 91]



RELIQUES  
OF  
ANCIENT ENGLISH POETRY:  
CONSISTING OF  
Old Heroic BALLADS, SONGS, and other  
PIECES of our earlier POETS,  
(Chiefly of the LYRIC kind.)  
Together with some few of later Date.  
VOLUME THE FIRST.

(Illustration: DURAT OPUS VATUM)

L O N D O N:  
Printed for J. DODSLEY in Pall-Mall.  
M DCC LXV.

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From dewy pastures, uplands sweet with thyme,

[pg 9]

A virgin breeze freshened the jaded day.

It wafted Collins' lonely vesper chime,

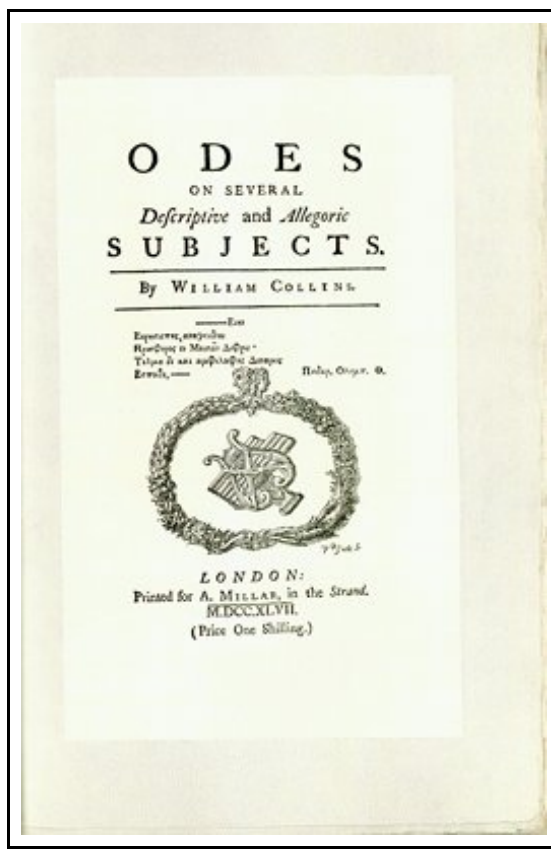
It breathed abroad the frugal note of Gray.

WATSON

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[pg 9]



ODES  
ON SEVERAL  
*Descriptive and Allegoric*  
SUBJECTS.

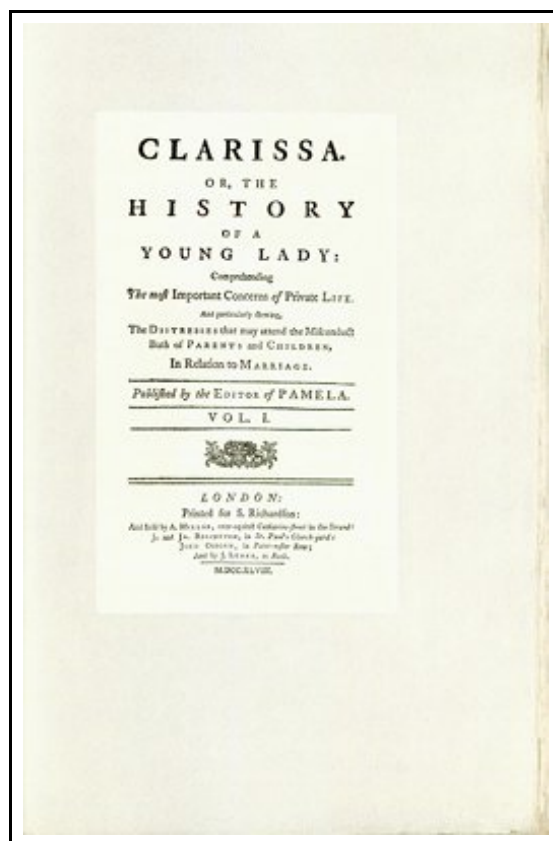
By WILLIAM COLLINS.

— — Εἴην  
Εὐρησιεπης ἀναγείσθαι  
Εὐρησιεπης ἀναγείσθαι  
Τόλμα δε καὶ ἀμφιλαφης Δυναμὺς  
Πινδαρ. Οὐλυμπ. Θ.

(Illustration)

L O N D O N:  
Printed for A. MILLAR, in the *Strand*.  
M.DCC.XLVII.  
(Price One Shilling.)

JOHNSON



[pg 94

CLARISSA.  
OR, THE  
HISTORY  
OF A  
YOUNG LADY:  
Comprehending  
*The most Important Concerns of Private LIFE.*  
And particularly shewing,  
The DISTRESSES that may attend the Misconduct  
Both of PARENTS and CHILDREN,  
In Relation to MARRIAGE.

---

*Published by the* EDITOR *of* PAMELA.

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VOL. I.

(Illustration)

*LONDON:*

Printed for S. Richardson:

And Sold by A. MILLAR, over-against *Catharine-street* in the *Strand*:

J. and JA. RIVINGTON, in *St. Paul's Church-yard*:

JOHN OSBORN, in *Pater-noster Row*;

And by J. LEAKE, at *Bath*.

M.DCC.XLVIII.

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Upon my word I think the *Ædipus Tyrannus*, the *Alchymist*, and *Tom Jones* the three most perfect plots ever planned.

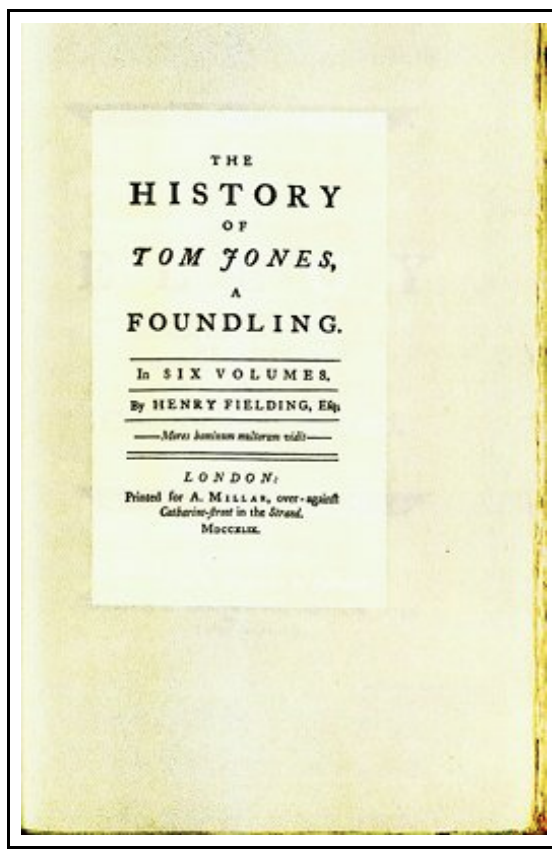
[pg 90]

COLERIDGE

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[pg 91]



THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
*TOM JONES*,  
A  
FOUNDLING.

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IN SIX VOLUMES.

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By HENRY FIELDING, Esq.

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— — *Mores hominum multorum vidit* — —

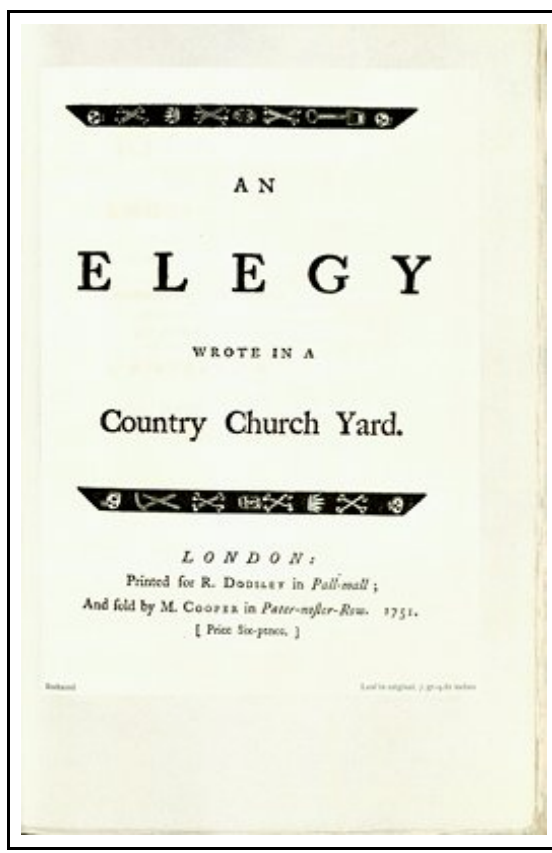
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L O N D O N:  
Printed for A. MILLAR, over-against  
*Catharine-street* in the Strand.  
MDCCXLIX.

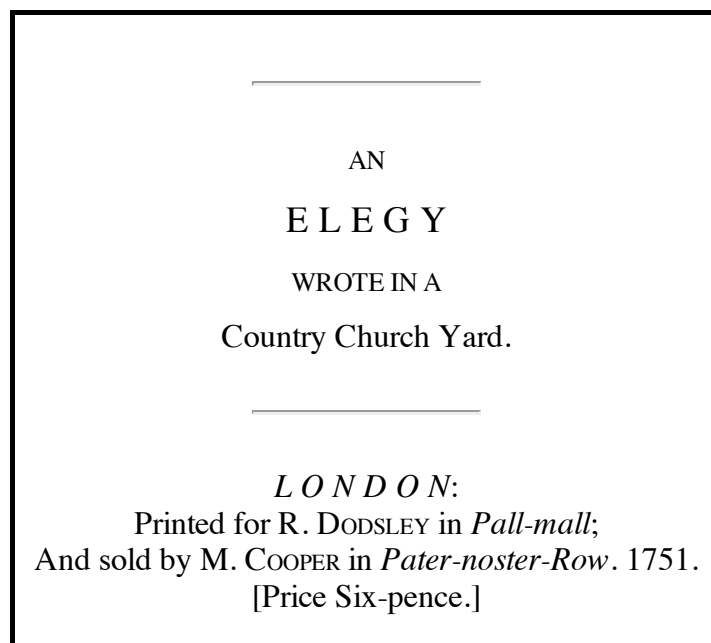
Now, gentlemen, I would rather be the author of that poem than take Quebec.

[pg 98]

WOLFE



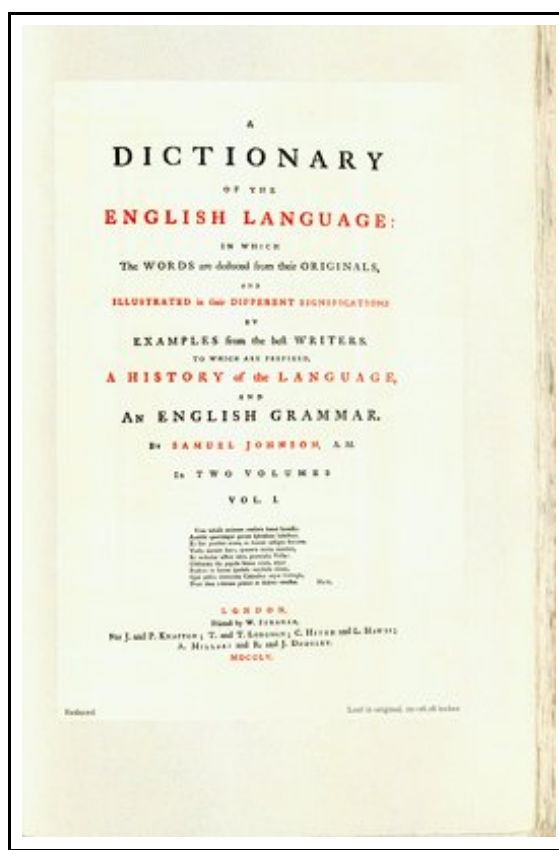
[pg 99]



I have devoted this book, the labour of years, to the honour of my country, that we may no longer yield the palm of philology without a contest to the nations of the Continent.

[pg 1(

JOHNSON



[pg 1(

A  
DICTIONARY  
OF THE  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE:  
IN WHICH  
The WORDS are deduced from their ORIGINALS,  
AND  
ILLUSTRATED in their DIFFERENT SIGNIFICATIONS  
BY  
EXAMPLES from the best WRITERS.  
TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED,

A HISTORY of the LANGUAGE,  
AND  
AN ENGLISH GRAMMAR.

BY SAMUEL JOHNSON, A. M.

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.

Cum tabulis animum censoris sumet  
honesti:

Audebit quæcunque parum splendoris  
habebunt,

Et sine pondere erunt, et honore indigna  
serentur.

Verba movere loco; quamvis invita  
recedant,

Et versentur adhuc intra penetralia Vestæ:

Obscurata diu populo bonus eruet, atque

Proferet in lucem speciosa vocabula  
rerum,

Quæ priscis memorata Catonibus atque  
Cethegis,

Nunc situs informis premit et deserta  
vetustas. HOR.

L O N D O N,  
Printed by W. STRAHAN,  
For J. and P. KNAPTON; T. and T. LONGMAN; C.  
HITCH and L. HAWES;  
A. MILLAR; and R. and J. DODSLEY.  
MDCCLV.

Reduced

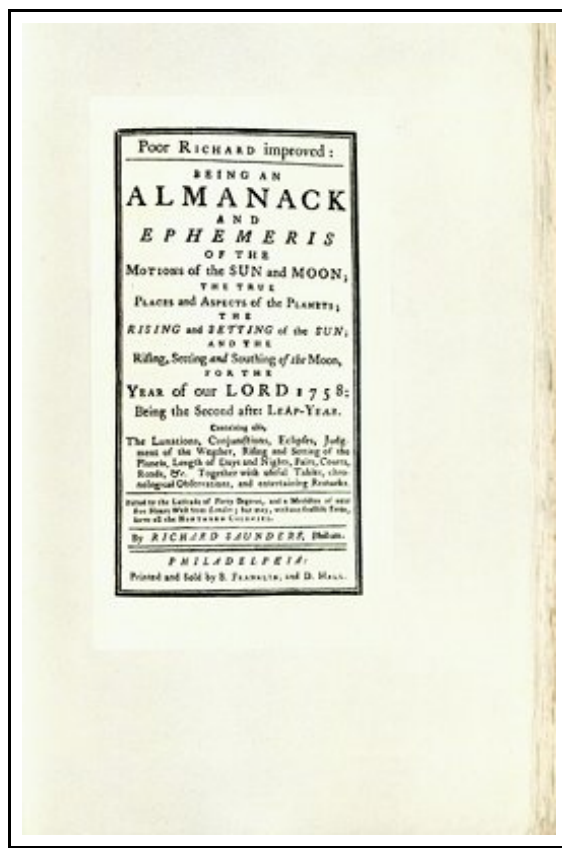
Leaf in original, 10 × 16.18 inches.

Eripuit cœlo fulmen sceptrumque tyrannis

[pg 10

TURGOT





Poor RICHARD improved:

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BEING AN  
**ALMANACK**  
 AND  
*EPHEMERIS*  
 OF THE  
 MOTIONS of the SUN and MOON;  
 THE TRUE  
 PLACES and ASPECTS of the PLANETS;  
 THE  
*RISING* and *SETTING* of the *SUN*;  
 AND THE  
 Rising, Setting *and* Southing of the Moon,  
 FOR THE  
 YEAR of our LORD 1758:  
 Being the Second after LEAP-YEAR.  
 Containing also,

The Lunations, Conjunctions,  
 Eclipses, Judgment of the Weather,  
 Rising and Setting of the Planets,  
 Length of Days and Nights, Fairs,  
 Courts, Roads, &c. Together with  
 useful Tables, chronological  
 Observations, and entertaining

Remarks.

---

Fitted to the Latitude of Forty Degrees, and a Meridian of near five Hours West from *London*; but may, without feasible Error, serve all the NORTHERN COLONIES.

---

By *RICHARD SAUNDERS*, Philom.

---

*PHILADELPEIA*:  
Printed and Sold by B. FRANKLIN, and D. HALL.

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There your son will find analytical reasoning diffused in a pleasing and perspicuous style. There he may imbibe, imperceptibly, the first principles on which our excellent laws are founded; and there he may become acquainted with an uncouth crabbed author, Coke upon Lytleton, who has disappointed and disheartened many a tyro, but who cannot fail to please in a modern dress.

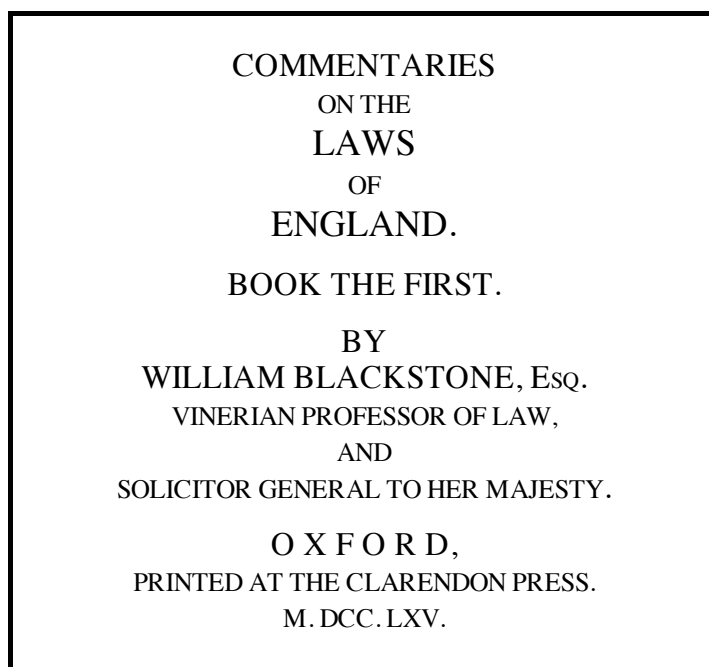
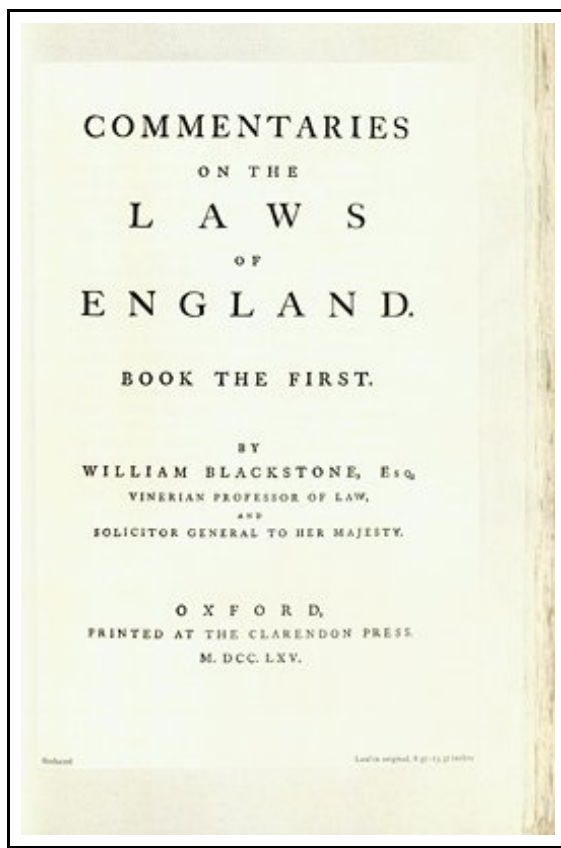
[pg 10]

MANSFIELD

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[pg 10]



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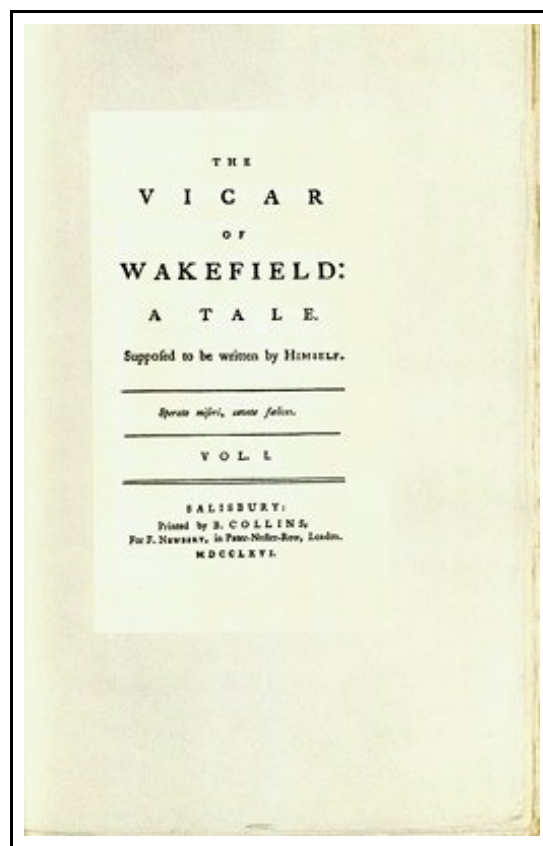
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I received one morning a message from poor Goldsmith that he was in great distress, and, as it was not in his power to come to me, begging that I would come to him as soon as possible. I sent him a guinea, and promised to come to him directly. I accordingly went as soon as I was dressed, and found that his landlady

[pg 10]

had arrested him for his rent, at which he was in a violent passion. I perceived that he had already changed my guinea, and had got a bottle of madeira and a glass before him. I put the cork into the bottle, desired he would be calm, and began to talk to him of the means by which he might be extricated. He then told me he had a novel (*The Vicar of Wakefield*) ready for the press, which he produced to me. I looked into it, and saw its merit; told the landlady I should soon return; and, having gone to a bookseller, sold it for sixty pounds. I brought Goldsmith the money, and he discharged his rent, not without rating his landlady in a high tone for having used him so ill.

JOHNSON



[pg 10]

THE  
VICAR  
OF  
WAKEFIELD:  
A TALE.  
Supposed to be written by HIMSELF.

*Sperate miseri, cavete fœlices.*

---

V O L. I.

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SALISBURY:  
Printed by B. COLLINS,  
For F. NEWBURY, in Pater-Noster-Row, London.  
MDCCLXVI.

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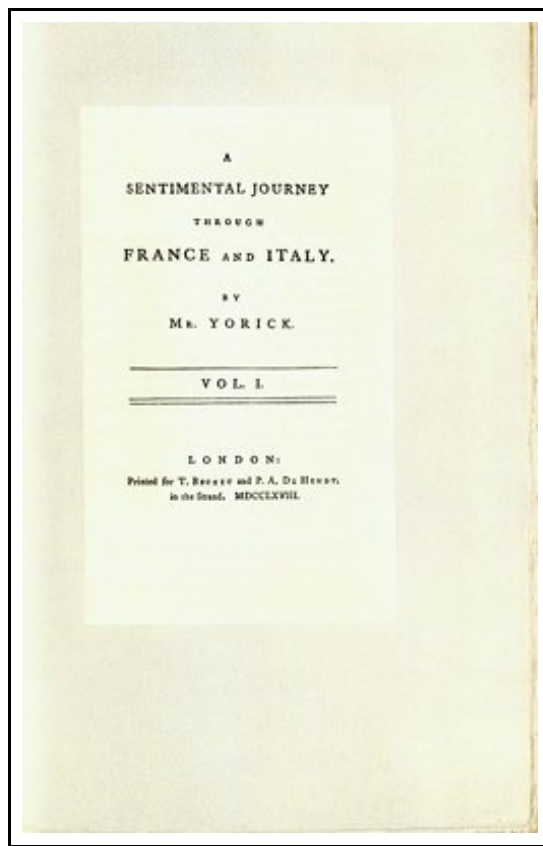
His exquisite sensibility is ever counteracted by his perception of the ludicrous and his ambition after the strange.

[pg 10]

TALFOURD

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[pg 10]

A  
SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY  
THROUGH  
FRANCE AND ITALY.  
BY  
MR. YORICK.

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VOL. I.

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L O N D O N :  
Printed for T. BECKET and P. A. DE HONDT,  
in the Strand. MDCCLXVIII.

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I know not indeed of any work on the principles of free government that is to be compared, in instruction, and intrinsic value, to this small and unpretending volume of *The Federalist*, not even if we resort to Aristotle, Cicero, Machiavel, Montesquieu, Milton, Locke, or Burke. It is equally admirable in the depth of its wisdom, the comprehensiveness of its views, the sagacity of its reflections, and the fearlessness, patriotism, candor, simplicity, and elegance with which its truths are uttered and recommended.

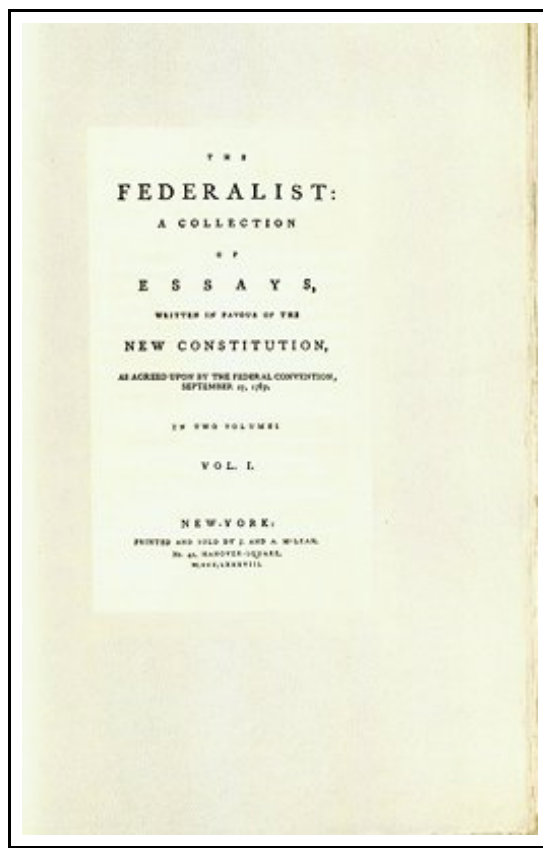
CHANCELLOR KENT

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[pg 1]

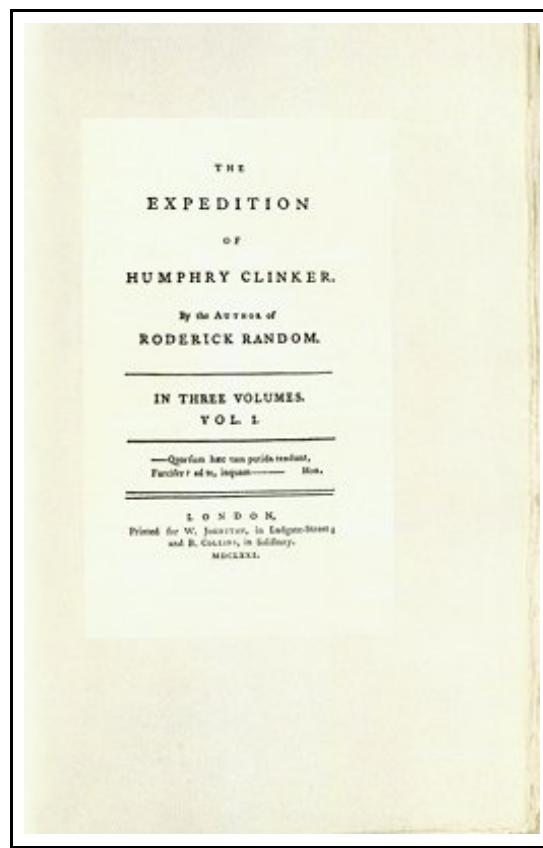
[pg 1]



THE  
FEDERALIST:  
A COLLECTION  
OF  
ESSAYS,  
WRITTEN IN FAVOUR OF THE  
NEW CONSTITUTION,  
AS AGREED UPON BY THE FEDERAL CONVENTION,  
SEPTEMBER 17, 1787.  
IN TWO VOLUMES  
VOL. I.  
NEW-YORK:  
PRINTED AND SOLD BY J. AND A. M'LEAN,  
No. 41, HANOVER-SQUARE,  
M,DCC,LXXXVIII.

ever been written since the goodly art of novel-writing began. Winifred Jenkins and Tabitha Bramble must keep Englishmen on the grin for ages to come; and in their letters and the story of their loves there is a perpetual fount of sparkling laughter, as inexhaustible as Bladud's well.

THACKERAY



[pg 11

THE  
EXPEDITION  
OF  
HUMPHRY CLINKER.  
By the AUTHOR of  
RODERICK RANDOM.  
—  
IN THREE VOLUMES.  
V O L. I.  
—



— — Quorsum hæc tam putida tendunt,

Furcifer? ad te, inquam— — HOR.

L O N D O N,

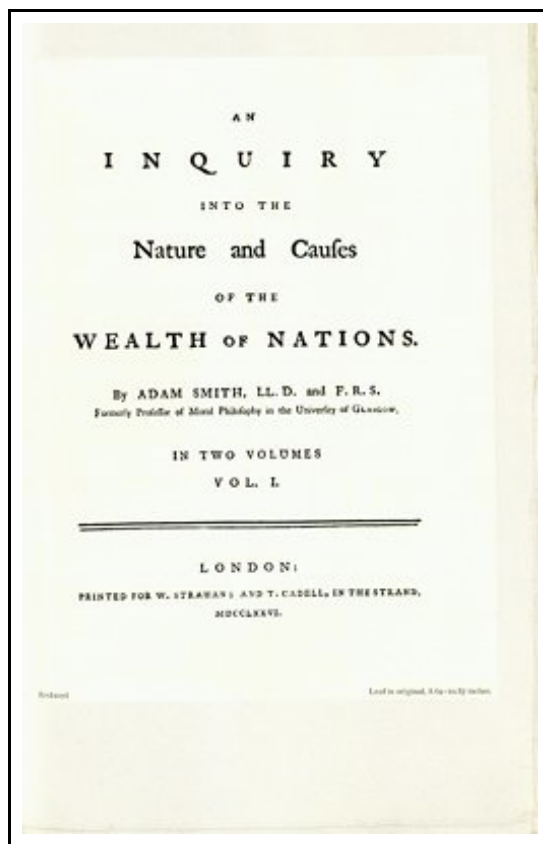
Printed for W. JOHNSTON, in Ludgate-Street;  
and B. COLLINS, in Salisbury.

MDCLXXI.

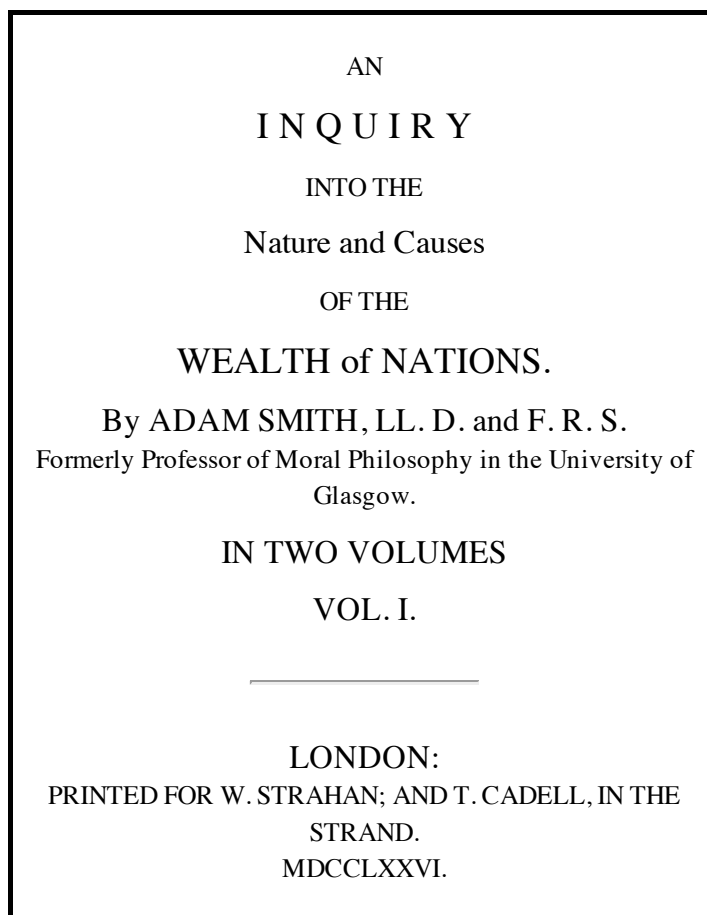
That is a book you should read: Adam Smith contributed more by the publication of this single work towards the happiness of men than has been effected by the united abilities of all the statesmen and legislators of whom history has preserved an authentic account.

[pg 11]

BUCKLE



[pg 11]



Reduced

Leaf in original, 8.62 × 10.87 inches.

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Sapping a solemn creed with solemn sneer;

[pg 11]

The lord of irony—

BYRON

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[pg 11]

